



Mediterranean Empires

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This essay focuses on the political, economic, and cultural history of the principal Mediterranean empires during the past four millennia. It is based on four lectures that I prepared for a Stanford program in the eastern Mediterranean region in 2009.

I look first at the political bases of Minoan Crete (1950-1200 BCE) and Mycenaean Greece (1600-1200 BCE), how conflict usurped wealth in Classical Greece (500-338 BCE), and how the Macedonians conquered Greece (338-146 BCE). I next examine how the Romans built their empire (509 BCE-110 CE), how they created wealth (27 BCE-476 CE), and why the western Roman Empire fell (5th century CE). I move on to the Byzantine Empire (330-1453) and investigate its sources of wealth and how foreign invasions (by Arabs, Crusaders, and Turks) led to its fall. I conclude with an analysis of the Ottoman Empire (1300-1923), showing how the Ottoman Turks formed a heartland in Anatolia and the Balkans (1300-1500), how they generated enormous wealth, and why the Ottoman Empire became a European pawn in the 19th century. A time line, bibliography, and description of the sites that I visited in the Mediterranean region are appended at the end of the essay.

Minoan Crete and Ancient Greece (1950-146 BCE)

Minoan Crete (1950-1200 BCE). The island of Crete (155 by 27 miles) was settled about 7000 BCE from Anatolia (modern Turkey). The settlers brought the Mediterranean agricultural package – wheat, barley, grapes, olives, and flax plus sheep, goats, cattle, and pigs. The Cretans were small in stature (men averaged 5 feet, 6 inches in height, women 5 feet, 1 inch) and had short life expectancies (men lived 35 years on average, women 30 years). Hieroglyphic writing was introduced from Egypt (c. 2200 BCE).



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%CE%94%CE%AF%CF%83%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%82_%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82_%CE%A6%CE%B1%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%8D_%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81%CE%AC_%CE%91_6380.JPG>
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*Side A of the Disc of Phaistos, Archeological Museum of Heraklion –
Minoan Cretan Languages Have Not Been Deciphered*

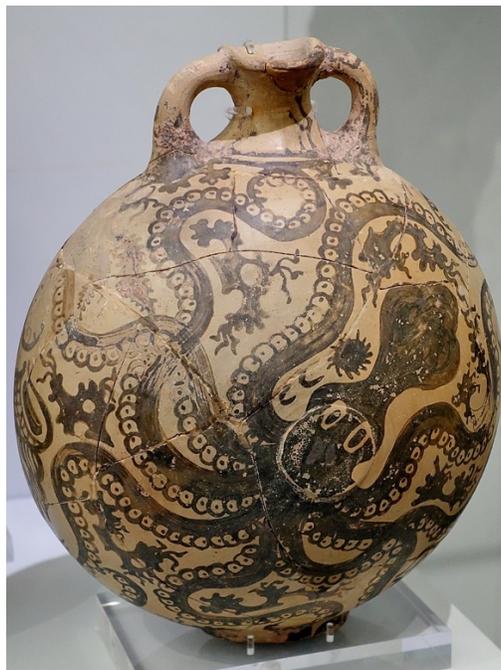
About 1950 BCE, large palace complexes were constructed in Knossos, Phaistos, Mallia, and Zakro. Each palace contained a temple, a royal court, vast storage areas, artisanal workshops, and a royal residence. Knossos was the largest city-state (c. 100,000 residents) and the leader of a loose confederation. Minoan Crete had a centralized, non-market, redistributive economic system with complex accounting. All commodities passed through the palaces.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons* available at
< https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Knossos_-_North_Portico_02.jpg >

North Portico, Palace of Knossos – The Largest Minoan Cretan Palace

Crete served as a trade crossroads, linking Asia (the Near East), Africa (Egypt), and Europe (the Aegean and Greece). The sophisticated Minoans exported raw materials (wine, olive oil, and cypress wood) and finished goods (pottery, cloth, and bronze weapons). They imported copper and tin (for bronze), gold and silver, and luxury goods (amber and lapis lazuli).



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pilgerflasche_05.jpg>

*Vase from Palaikastro, Minoan Crete, c. 1575-1500 BCE –
Pottery Was a Major Minoan Export Commodity*

Decline began in 1628 BCE, when volcanic Thera (today's Santorini, 60 miles north) erupted with accompanying earthquakes. In

1450 BCE, all palaces in Crete (except Knossos) were destroyed, probably due to earthquakes followed by a Mycenaean invasion. The Mycenaeans then ruled Crete and introduced the Greek language. About 1200 BCE, the entire Mycenaean society collapsed after devastating earthquakes, and people in Crete either migrated or took refuge settlement. Minoan Crete never recovered.

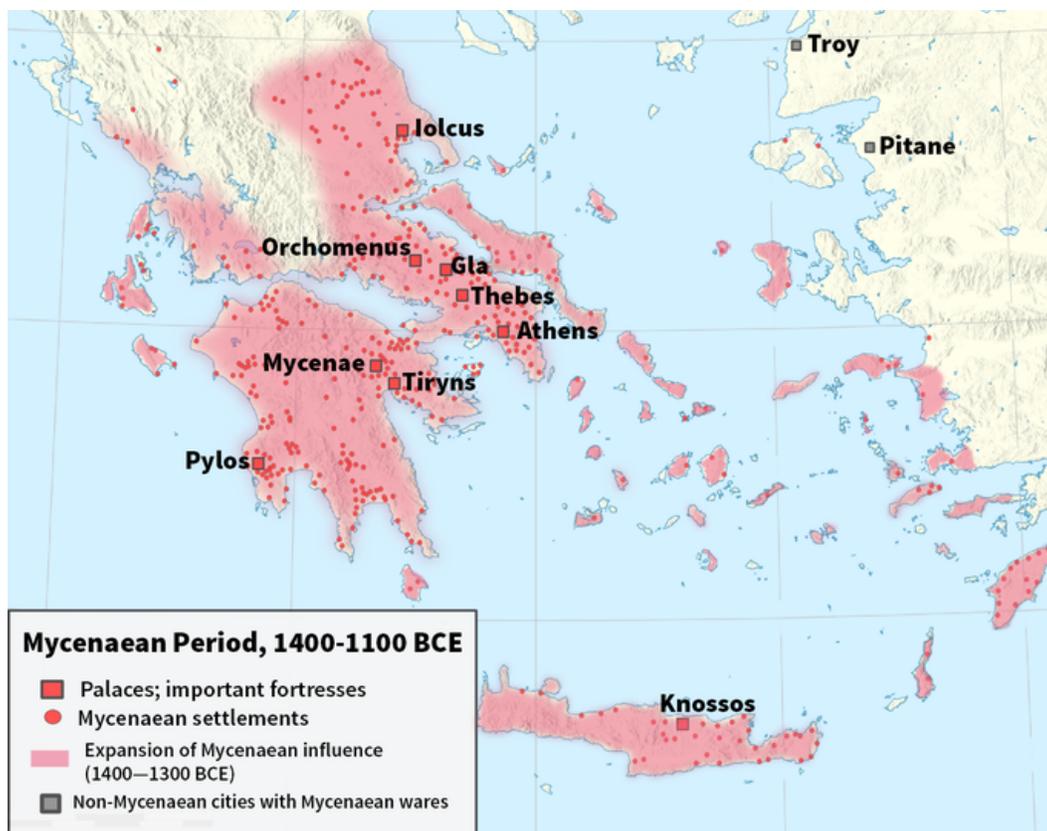


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Minoan_Crete-en.svg

Minoan Crete (1950-1200 BCE)

Mycenaean Greece (1600-1100 BCE). Starting about 2000 BCE, Achaean Greeks migrated from Central Asia into Greece and later

evolved to become the Mycenaeans. The Greek invaders destroyed existing settlements, gradually absorbed the Neolithic peoples, and adopted their Mediterranean agricultural package of cereals, grape vines, and olive trees. Agriculture prospered as the Greek settlers built roads, bridges, and ports.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mycenaean_World_en.png

Mycenaean Greece, After the Conquest of Crete – 1400-1100 BCE

Wealth in the first Mycenaean era, the Shaft Grave Era (1600-1450 BCE), came from agriculture and mining, especially copper, silver, and

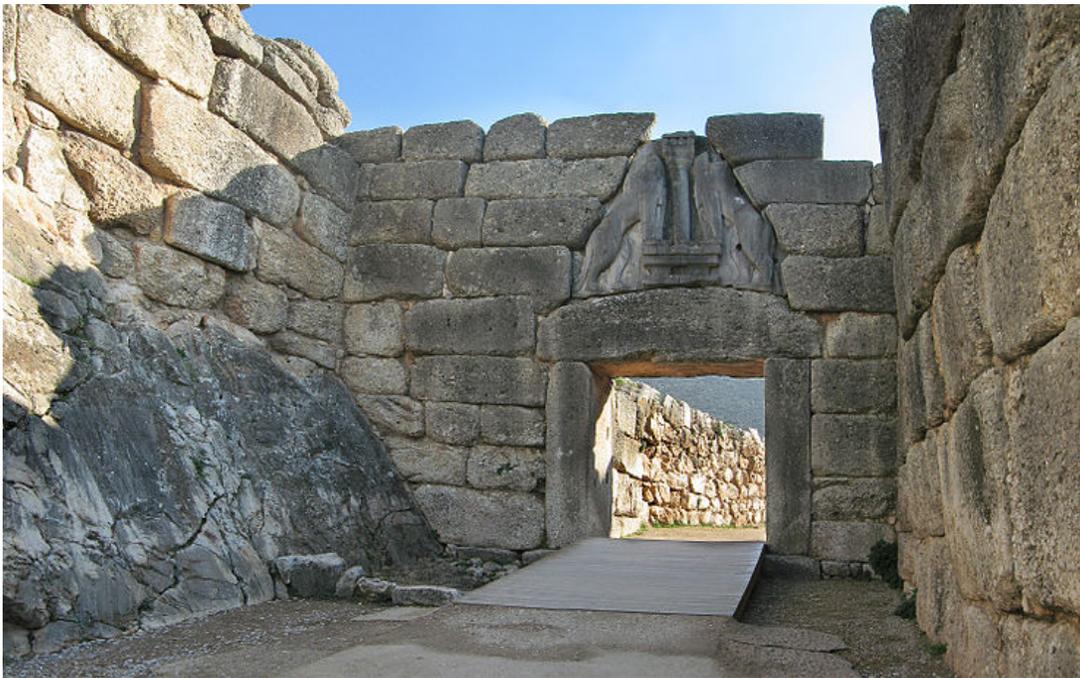
lead from Laurion in Attica. Rich displays of funerary objects, notably gold masks, have been found in excavated tombs from that era. After 1450 BCE, when the Mycenaean peoples conquered Minoan Crete, mainland Greece superseded Crete as the key trade center of the eastern Mediterranean region and trade with Egypt and the Near East boomed. The Mycenaeans exported olive oil, wine, and silver, and they imported tin, gold, linen, and papyrus. To facilitate trade, they established colonies in the Aegean islands, Crete, Cyprus (to produce copper), Rhodes, Miletus, and southern Italy.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MaskOfAgamemnon.jpg>>

The Mask of Agamemnon – Grave Circle A, Mycenae, 16th century BCE

The ruling classes then built ostentatious palaces, on the Cretan model, which served as royal courts and residences, temples, storage areas, and workshops. The Mycenaean elite created small, independent kingdoms around those palaces in Mycenae, Tiryns, Athens, Thebes, and Pylos.

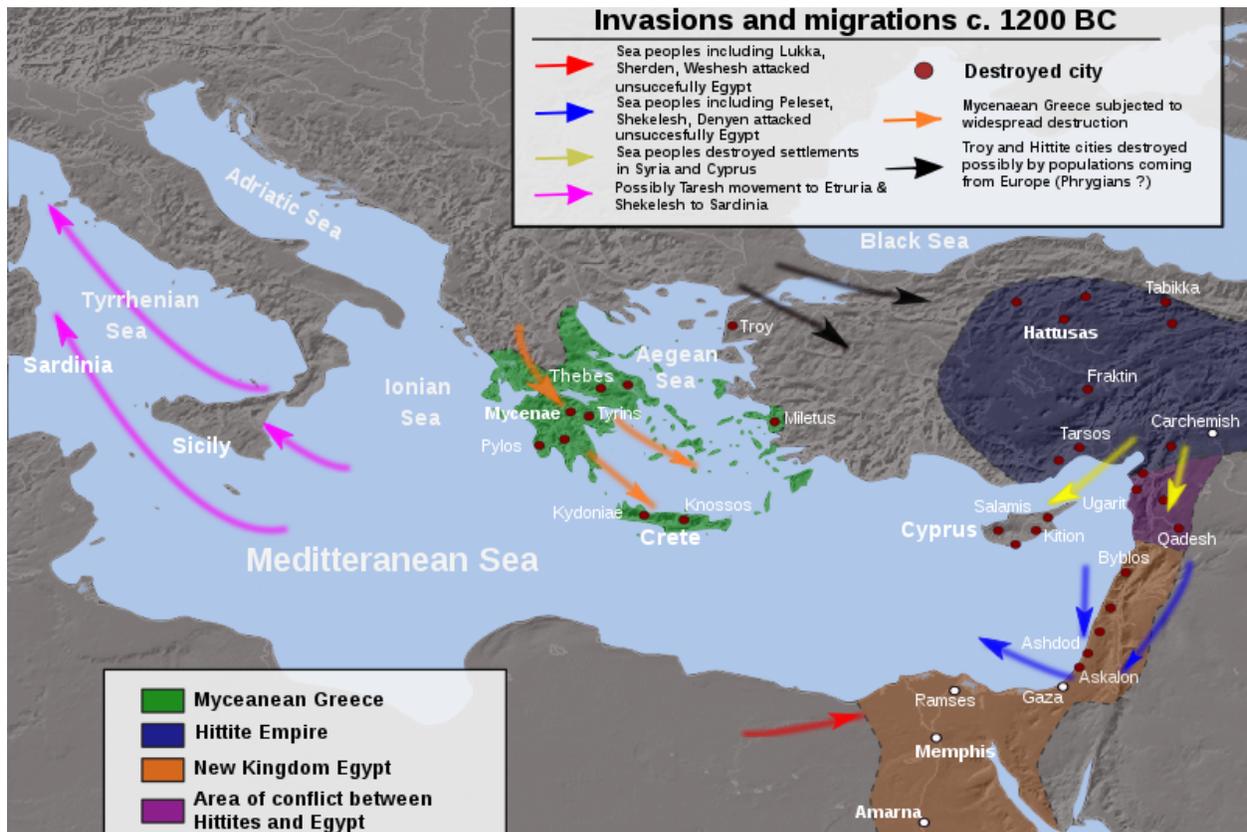


*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lions-Gate-Mycenae.jpg>>*

*The Lions' Gate, Main Entrance to the Palace of Mycenae –
13th century BCE*

The Mycenaean kingdoms were destroyed suddenly, about 1200 BCE. Destructive earthquakes (not invasions or drought) caused widespread economic dislocation in the centralized palace distribution

system. Displaced Mycenaeans migrated and joined hordes of piratical raiders who devastated Anatolia and the Near East. The towns fizzled, and a Dark Age set in about 1100 BCE.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bronze_Age_End.svg

*Calamitous Invasions and Migrations, c. 1200 BCE –
Fall of the Mycenaean Kingdom*

City-states in Archaic Greece (750-500 BCE). From 1100 BCE to 750 BCE, Ancient Greece experienced a Dark Age of instability, depopulation, and contracting agriculture. Greece emerged triumphant

during the next quarter-millennium, 750 BCE to 500 BCE, known as the Archaic Age. The destruction of the Mycenaean palace societies led to the rise of Classical Greek city-states in Greece. Located on both mainland and island Greece, the city-states were in direct competition with one another. In the 10th century BCE, Athens (with a population of 20,000) emerged as the largest city-state. Between the 8th and 6th centuries BCE, Corinth became the strongest economic and naval power in Greece and colonized Corcyra (Corfu).



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Corinth_BW_2017-10-10_10-55-28.jpg>

*The Doric Temple of Apollo, Corinth, 8th century BCE –
First Greek Temple Built of Stone*

The Greek city-states colonized widely in search of arable land, metals, and trading opportunities (especially to import grain). Three waves of Greek migrants established city-states on the Aegean coast of western Anatolia between 1000 and 800 BCE. Ionians settled the center (Miletus and Ephesus), Dorians the south (Rhodes and Halicarnassus), and Aeolians the north (Mytilene and Smyrna). By the 7th century, those city-states had amassed substantial trading wealth, and between 650 and 550 BCE Miletus set up colony ports in the Sea of Marmara (Abydos and Cyzicus) and Black Sea (Sinope and Trapezus) regions.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons* available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Milet_2013-03-25p.jpg>

*Ancient Greek Theater, Miletus, Ionian Coast of Anatolia –
7th century BCE*

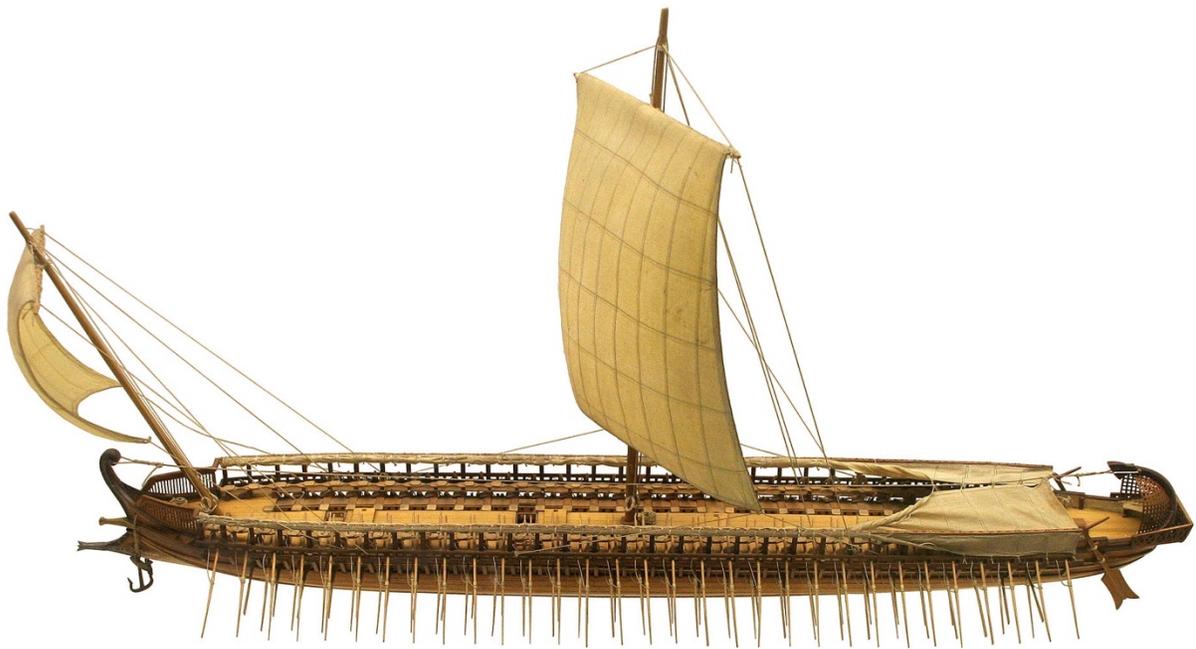
The Greeks also moved westward. Between 730 and 650 BCE, colonists from Corinth established Syracuse in southeastern Sicily and those from Euboea settled elsewhere in Sicily and in southern Italy. Syracuse became the largest Greek city and Sicily the leading producer of grain in the Greek-speaking region. Ionians from Phocaea set up a colony in Massalia (Marseille) in 600 BCE and, during the next half century, created subsidiary towns in southern France and eastern Spain.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greek_Colonization_Archaic_Period.svg

*Greek Colonization in the Mediterranean and Black Seas –
 1000-500 BCE*

Conflict and Tribute in Classical Greece (500-338 BCE). Two city-states, Athens and Sparta, eventually dominated and became deadly rivals for hegemony in Greece. Athens was larger and had a stronger navy. Sparta had a superior infantry and formed a coalition with Corinth, the third largest city-state.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Model_of_a_greek_trireme.jpg

Model of a Greek Trireme Ship – Athens’ Naval Supremacy, 4th c. BCE

Cyrus the Great created the Achaemenid Persian Empire by uniting the Persians and Medes in 559, taking Anatolia in 547, and conquering Babylon in 539. The Persians ruled Eurasia from the Indus Valley to

Thrace as benevolent despots. Darius, the Persian Emperor, invaded Greece in 490, but the Athenian army stopped his advance at the Battle of Marathon (490 BCE). His son, Xerxes, suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of the Athenian and Spartan armies at Salamis (480) and Platea (479), ending the Persian War in Greece.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Greco-Persian_Wars-en.svg

Classical Greece During the Greco-Persian Wars (500-479 BCE)

After the war, hostilities re-emerged between Athens' coalition of city-states (the Delian League) and Sparta's (the Peloponnesian League). The 40,000 adult-male citizens of democratic Athens forced its partners in the Delian League to pay tribute in return for Athens' keeping the Aegean Sea free of piracy and safe from Persia. Athens also controlled the valuable silver mines at Laurion. The 9,000 adult-male citizens of oligarchic Sparta used military prowess to overrun neighboring peoples and subjugate them to helotry (slavery) as farm workers. Spartan male citizens worked as warriors.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Spartan_helmet_2_British_Museum.jpg>

Spartan Warrior's Helmet, 5th century BCE – British Museum

The 5th-century struggle between Athenian imperialism and Spartan hegemony resulted in the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE). In a war of attrition, Sparta's superior infantry won over Athens's stronger navy. Sparta gained control of Athenian farm-lands and olive orchards and received critical funding from Persia. But the protracted war sapped Greek vitality.

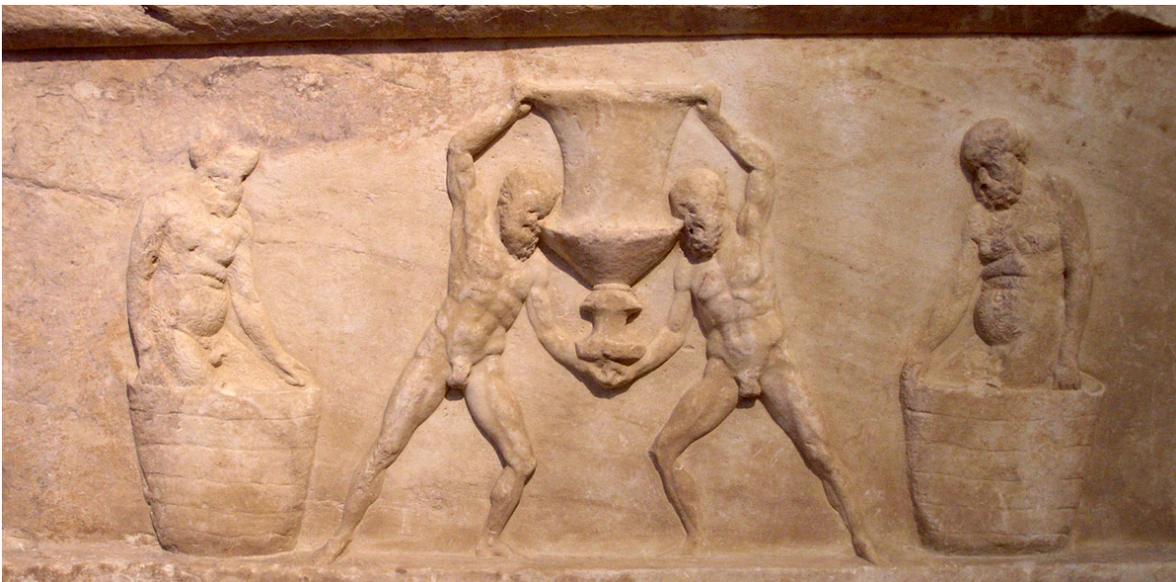


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peloponnesian_war_alliances_431_BC.png

*Alliances at the Outset of The Peloponnesian War (431-434 BCE) –
 Delian League (Orange) vs. Peloponnesian League (Green)*

Agriculture and Trade in Classical Greece (500-338 BCE). The city-states in Classical Greece drew most of their wealth from

agriculture and foreign trade. Agriculture evolved to match the Mediterranean climate (hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters), soils (limestone), and topography (slopes and valleys). The first domesticated plants and animals reached Greece by about 6000 BCE. The principal cereals (barley, wheat), pulses (lentils, peas, chickpeas), and animals (sheep, goats, pigs, cattle) spread to Greece from the Near East. By about 4000 BCE, the use of animals expanded from meat production to include draft power, wool, hides, and milk, cheese, and yogurt. Wine, olive oil, fruits, and vegetables were added in the third millennium BCE.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NAMA_Satyres_%26_sil%C3%A8nes.jpg>

*Satyrs Making Wine on a Dionysian Bas-relief –
National Archeological Museum of Athens*

All Greek city-states based their wealth mainly on taxing agriculture. Four-fifths of laborers were employed solely on farms. In Athens, farm sizes ranged between 14 and 70 acres, and management was done either by owner-operators, hired bailiffs, or tenant farmers. Labor was contributed from small farmers, hired workers, and slaves. In Sparta, by contrast, nearly all labor was by slaves under the helotry system. Agricultural specialization was widespread – grain in Thessaly, wine in Attica, and olives in Mykonos.

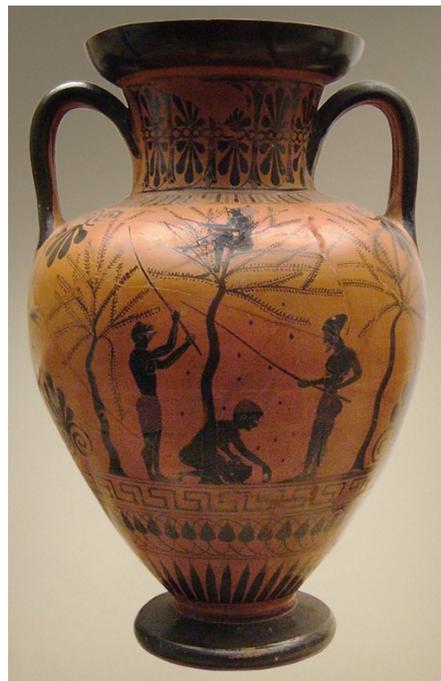


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Old_olive_tree_in_Karystos,_Euboia,_Greece.jpg>

*Old Olive Tree, Karystos, Euboia, Greece –
Olive Oil Was a Staple in the Mediterranean Diet*

Athens gained additional wealth from its position as an entrepôt and its use of naval power to enforce trade monopolies. To pay for its

substantial food imports (from Russia, Egypt, and Sicily), Athens exported silver coins, wine, olive oil, woolen cloth, and pottery. The most important trade route was to the Black Sea (for grain, fish, timber, and slaves). Control of the Hellespont thus was critical for Athens. Other important trade routes led to Egypt and Cyprus, the Ionian coast of Asia Minor, and Sicily, southern Italy, and Spain.

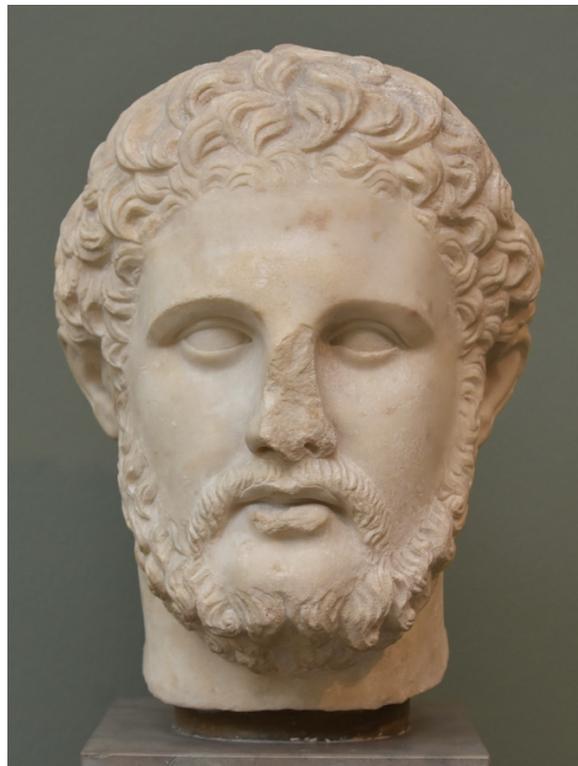


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amphora_olive-gathering_BM_B226.jpg>

Giant Greek Amphora, Container for Shipping Wine and Olive Oil, Depicting the Harvest of Olives – c. 520 BCE, British Museum

Macedonian and Hellenistic Greece (338-146 BCE). In the mid-4th century BCE, Macedonia was a 300-year-old, small, feudal kingdom,

located in the mountains and plains north of Greece. Philip II of Macedonia (ruled 359-336 BCE) was an exceptional leader and military innovator. He invented the phalanx formation and the 16-foot-long pike, which allowed effective penetration of enemy front lines, and expanded into neighboring Thrace and Illyria. In 338, he defeated Athens and Thebes at the decisive Battle of Chaeronea and initiated two millennia of foreign rule of Greece.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons available at*
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Phillip_II,_king_of_Macedonia,_Roman_copy_of_Greek_original,_Ny_Carlsberg_Glyptotek,_Copenhagen_\(36420294055\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Phillip_II,_king_of_Macedonia,_Roman_copy_of_Greek_original,_Ny_Carlsberg_Glyptotek,_Copenhagen_(36420294055).jpg)>

Phillip II of Macedonia – Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen

Upon Philip's death in 336, his son, Alexander (the Great, ruled 336-323 BCE) succeeded him as King of Macedonia. In 334, Alexander began his attack on the Persian Empire by winning the Battle of Granicus River in northwestern Anatolia (Marmara). He then swept through Anatolia, easily defeating pockets of Persian resistance.

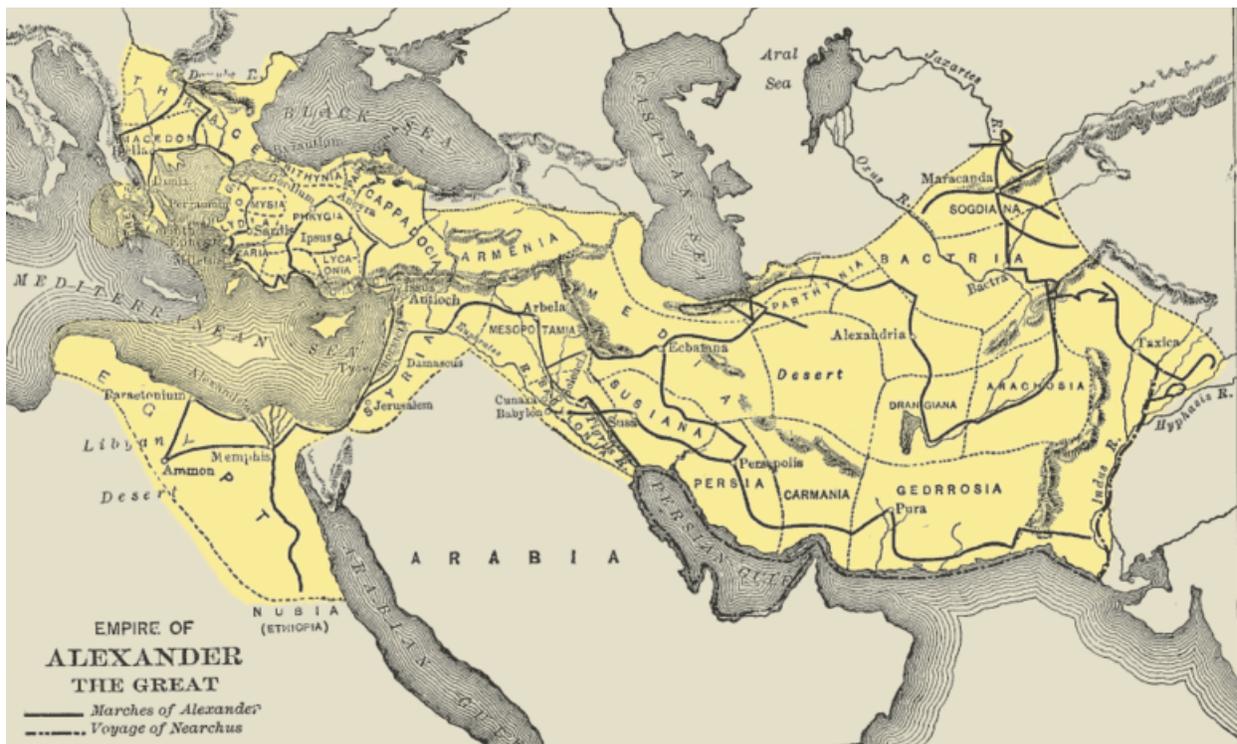


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexander_the_Great,_from_Alexandria,_Egypt,_3rd_cent._BCE,_Ny_Carlsberg_Glyptotek,_Copenhagen_\(5\)_36375553176.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alexander_the_Great,_from_Alexandria,_Egypt,_3rd_cent._BCE,_Ny_Carlsberg_Glyptotek,_Copenhagen_(5)_36375553176.jpg)>

*Alexander the Great of Macedonia –
Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen*

A year later, Darius III of Persia brought 250,000 Persian troops to southeastern Anatolia to stop Alexander's advance. Despite having only

35,000 men, Alexander won the epic Battle of Issus with superior cavalry and strategy. In 331, Alexander ended Persian opposition with his victory at the Battle of Gaugemela (in contemporary Iraq). Alexander was a military genius and an extraordinary public administrator. He built new cities and trading opportunities throughout the former Persian Empire.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map-alexander-empire.png>

*Alexander the Great's Empire –
After Defeating Achaemenid Persia, 334-323 BCE*

After Alexander died (probably from malaria) in 323, his Macedonian generals divided his conquests into three Hellenistic kingdoms – Antigonid (centered in Macedonia), Seleucid (Syria), and Ptolemaic (Egypt). Antigonus and his heirs ruled Macedonia and Greece until the Roman conquest in 146 BCE. Rome later conquered Syria (62 BCE) and Egypt (30 BCE), ending the Hellenistic era.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Diadochi.png?>

*The Hellenistic (Seleucid, Antigonid, and Ptolemaic) Kingdoms –
2nd century BCE*

The Roman Empire (509 BCE-476 CE)

Origins of Rome and the Roman Republic. The legendary founding of Rome occurred in the mid-8th century BCE, when Romulus killed his twin brother, Remus, and established Rome. For several centuries, the Latin-speaking city struggled to survive but gradually expanded by defeating its Etruscan neighbors in central and northern Italy. By the mid-3rd century BCE, Rome had gained control of the entire Italian peninsula south of the Po River by forming alliances with small Italian kingdoms and by taking over the Greek city-states in southern Italy. The Romans defeated Hannibal of Carthage in the late 3rd century BCE and gained Sicily, Sardinia, and coastal Iberia.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_conquest_of_Italy.PNG

The Expansion of the Roman Empire In Italy – 500-218 BCE

Rome conquered Gaul (modern France) in two parts – Provence in 121 BCE, and central and northern Gaul in 50 BCE (following Julius

Caesar's eight-year campaign). The Roman Empire expanded into Greece in the second century BCE, and Pompey conquered Asia Minor (modern Turkey), Syria, and Jerusalem by defeating the Seleucid Hellenes (Macedonians) in 64-62 BCE. Between 62 and 50 BCE, Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar ruled jointly as the First Triumvirate. Caesar marched his conquering army back from Gaul, took Rome, and became dictator (49-44 BCE) until he was murdered.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galea_\(helmet\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galea_(helmet))>

*Militaristic Ethos in Roman Administration –
Decorated Roman Officer's Helmet (Galea)*

Caesar's adopted son, Octavian, Mark Antony, and Lepidus divided the empire under the Second Triumvirate (44-31 BCE). While

Octavian took firm control in the west, Antony dallied with Cleopatra (the pharaoh of Egypt) in the east. The formation of the Mediterranean heart of the Roman Empire was completed in 30 BCE, when Octavian defeated Cleopatra and Antony and captured Egypt from the Ptolemaic Hellenes. In 27 BCE, Octavian formed the Roman Principate, changed his name to Augustus Caesar, and declared himself the first Roman emperor.

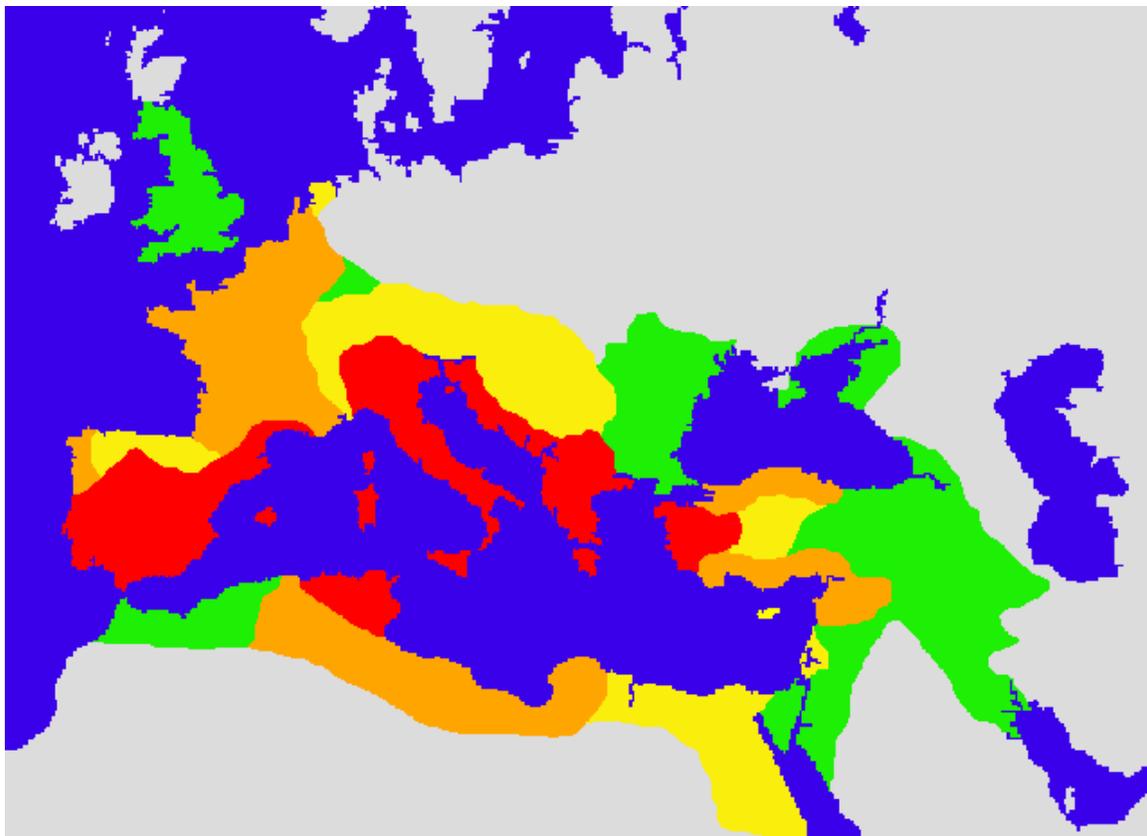


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cleopatra_Tetradrachm_Antiochia.jpg>

*Cleopatra and Mark Antony, Two Sides of the Same Coin –
Silver Tetradrachm Struck At the Antioch Mint, 36 BCE*

Expansion and Consolidation under Imperial Rome. The expansion of the Roman Empire continued apace under Emperor Augustus (ruled 27 BCE-14 CE). His strategy was to expand the empire

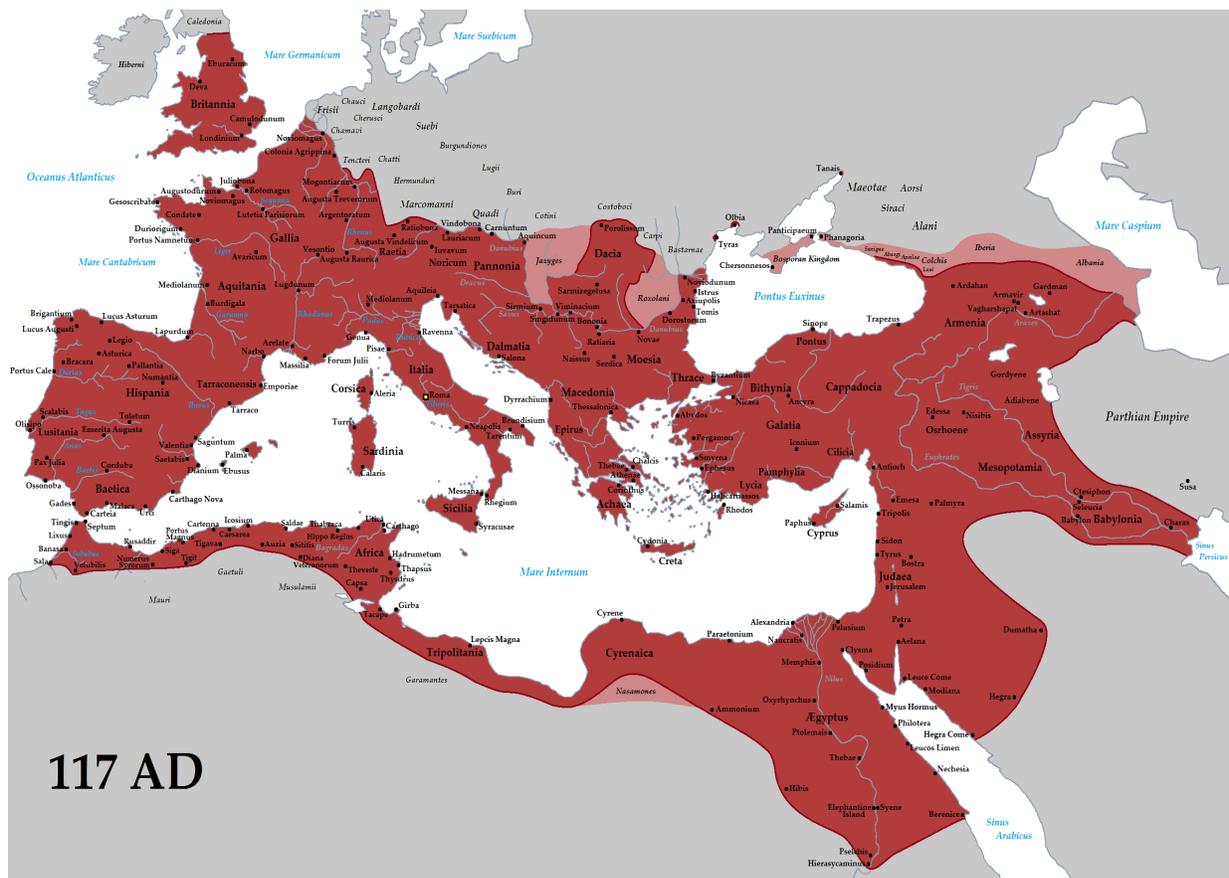
to its natural frontiers – rivers in the north and east, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Sahara Desert in the south. To reach the Danube River in the northeast, Augustus ordered his army to conquer the northern Balkan tribes. To fill in a salient running from the Rhine River to the Alps, the Romans suppressed the Alpine tribes. In the east, the empire already extended to the Euphrates River, and Augustus chose not to fight the Parthian Empire across that boundary.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_Empire.png>

The Roman Empire under Augustus, 14 CE (Red, Tan, and Yellow)

Augustus then advised his successors not to extend the empire further. But Claudius (ruled 41-54), seeking prestige, conquered Britain in 43, although Rome reaped no net economic benefit. Trajan (ruled 98-117) annexed Dacia (modern Romania), across the Danube, in 106 and Armenia and northern Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) in 114, but his war with Parthia was fruitless.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_Empire_Trajan_117AD.png

The Roman Empire At Its Peak in 117 CE – Under Emperor Trajan (Ruled 98-117)

Hadrian (ruled 117-138) consolidated the Roman Empire with defensive fortifications to fill gaps in the natural frontier. Across northern Britain, he built Hadrian's Wall, a 75-mile-long, stone barrier. To connect the Rhine and Danube Rivers, Hadrian constructed a 350-mile-long, timber palisade across the German frontier.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hadrian%27s_wall_at_Greenhead_Lough.jpg

Hadrian's Wall At Greenhead Lough, Northern England

During the *pax Romana* in the 1st-mid-3rd centuries, political stability encouraged the development of agriculture and trade.

Migrations of Italian ex-soldier-settlers to north Africa, Iberia, and Gaul

eased population pressures in Italy and spurred agricultural expansion in the western provinces. Agricultural taxation funded monument building in Rome – fora and palaces to glorify emperors and collossei and baths to mollify plebians. The most significant and long-lasting of these monuments was the Roman Colloseum, opened by Emperor Titus in 80.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roma06\(js\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roma06(js).jpg)>

*Bread and Circuses in the Roman Empire –
The Colosseum (Flavian Amphitheater), 80 CE*

Sources of Wealth – Agriculture. Agriculture, producing cereals, olives, grapes, and animals, was the main source of wealth in the Roman Empire. Most farms were small, and even the larger farms consisted of

many fragmented plots. Much of the agricultural land in the Roman Empire was farmed by private owner-operators – mostly smallholders but including some larger farmers. Tenant farmers provided labor on the aristocratic large estates and on the vast imperial land-holdings, confiscated when Rome annexed new provinces. Some slave estates existed, but they were largely confined to central and southern Italy and never provided a dominant share of agriculture production. Agricultural profitability arose from intensification (greater labor use and shorter fallow periods) and specialization (the introduction of cash crops and better crop combinations). The Romans did not expand agriculture much by introducing better agricultural technologies or new crops.

Most agricultural expansion – of wheat (in Africa, Egypt, northern Gaul, and southern Britain), olives (in Africa and Iberia), and vineyards (in Gaul and Iberia) – occurred in the newly developed west (and in Egypt), not in the previously settled east. The colonization of the western provinces with former Roman soldiers transferred manpower, skills, and capital to newly opened lands. Public investments in irrigation and transportation encouraged greater agricultural production.

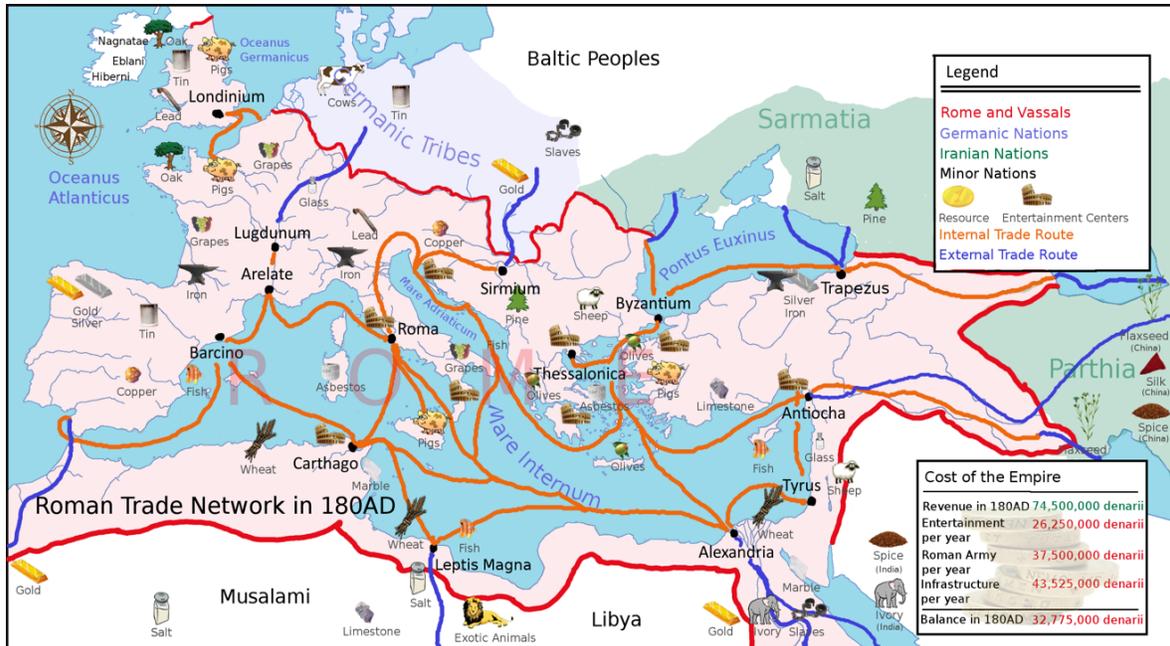
Agricultural taxation consisted of land taxes and head taxes that amounted to one-tenth to one-fifth of the value of farm production. Those taxes transferred most agricultural surpluses from smallholders and tenants and left many of them in dire poverty. Agriculture thus produced vast wealth for Rome's aristocracy but not for many of the empire's farmers.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:M%C3%A4hmaschine.jpg>>

*Harvesting in Roman Agriculture –
Bas Relief On Wall in Buzanoy, Belgium*

Sources of Wealth – Foreign Trade. The gains from foreign trade were only a minor source of wealth in the Roman Empire. The high costs of land trade reduced traded volumes, especially in bulk commodities like grain and timber, and led to trade by sea where possible. Rome levied a 25 percent tariff (*tetarte*) on imports into the empire. The collection of trade taxes was strongly enforced, and tariff revenues went into imperial coffers. Rome encouraged private participation in trading, financing, processing, and provisioning and protecting trade caravans. Roman governments rarely intervened militarily to promote or control foreign trade. Decisions to expand and defend the empire did not depend on foreign trade. Imperial policy promoted the development of key port cities, including Alexandria (Egypt), Antioch (Syria), and Carthage (North Africa).



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe_180ad_roman_trade_map.png

Roman Trade Routes and Ports, 180 CE

Rome imported five “essential luxuries,” mostly consumed by the aristocracy. Pepper (along with ginger, cloves, and cinnamon) came to Rome on the Spice Route from India and the East Indies by sea and land. Silk (plus ginger, porcelain, and cinnamon) moved along the Silk Road from China, mostly by land to Antioch. Ivory (plus gold and slaves) was transported on the Trans-Saharan Route on dromedary camels introduced from Arabia by the Romans. Frankincense and myrrh moved on the Incense Road from South Arabia via Petra (in modern Jordan)

and Alexandria to Rome to provide religious and funerary incense and ingredients for perfumes and medicines. Amber (along with timber and fish) went on the Amber Route from the German Baltic across the Alps to Rome. To pay for those luxuries, Rome exported gold, silver, wine, glassware, pottery and textiles. Foreign trade thus sated the rich but provided limited wealth for Rome.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Silk_Road_in_the_I_century_AD_-_en.svg>

*The Silk Road, Linking the Roman and Han Chinese Empires –
1st c. BCE-3rd c. CE*

Sources of Wealth – Foreign Conquest. The Roman Empire expanded between the 3rd century BCE and the 2nd century CE until the

Mediterranean Sea became a Roman lake. Initially, Rome expanded to defeat its foreign enemies and control its natural frontiers. Then, Rome settled former soldiers in colonies to develop an agricultural tax base.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hadrian%27s_villa_near_Tivoli_366.JPG>

*Emperor Hadrian's Villa On 200 Acres Near Tivoli –
The Rich Benefited Most from Roman Conquest*

Imperial Rome followed three different models in governing, developing, and taxing its new territories. In the eastern Mediterranean, Rome sought to pacify the areas formerly ruled by Hellenes, preserve the advanced Greek culture, rule indirectly through existing local

governments, and tax enough to pay provincial expenses (including Roman troops) and to provide modest (if any) transfers to Rome.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_Theatre_in_Bosra.jpg>

Rome Pacified the Greek East – Roman Theater In Bosra, Syria

In the western Mediterranean and northern Africa (except Egypt), Rome's strategy was to settle Roman ex-soldiers, introduce Roman culture and direct Roman rule, invest in irrigation to expand agriculture, and tax agriculture heavily to provide food and revenues for Rome and Italy.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pont_du_Gard_BLS.jpg>

*Rome Developed and Taxed the West –
Pont du Gard, Roman Aqueduct Near Nîmes, Provence, France*

In Egypt, Rome preserved the Egyptian culture, ruled the province as an imperial reserve, introduced improved water wheels and threshers to enhance agricultural productivity, and taxed Nile agriculture heavily to transfer wheat and funds to Rome. The Roman officials in Egypt were primarily interested in transferring resources and wheat to Rome, and they made little attempt to influence Egyptian culture other than to persecute Coptic Christianity.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Trajan_on_the_Roman_Mammisi_at_Dendera,_Egypt.jpg>

Rome Invested In and Heavily Taxed Egypt – Emperor Trajan Making Offerings To Egyptian Gods, Dendera Temple, Egypt

Throughout the empire, provincial cities collected taxes, maintained law and order, and recruited soldiers for Rome. The city governments also paid, fed, clothed, and housed Roman legionnaires and provided them with transportation and equipment. They further maintained public buildings, baths, and aqueducts and put on religious festivals. Within the Roman Empire, the locus of economic power shifted twice – from the Greek east to Italy (1st century BCE) and from Italy to the western provinces (2nd century CE).



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Septimius_Severus_Glyptothek_Munich_357.jpg>

Septimius Severus (ruled 193-211), Native of Leptis Magna in Tripolitania (Libya) – Rome Encouraged Ethnic Minorities

Why the Roman Empire Declined and Fell. The Roman Empire began to decline in the mid-3rd century, divided in half in the late 4th century, and the western part, centered in Rome, splintered and fell in the 5th century (476). The eastern half, centered in Constantinople, became the Byzantine Empire and succumbed to Turkish invaders in the mid-15th century. Why did the Roman Empire divide and fall? Edward Gibbon, the 18th century British historian, argued that the loss of

individual liberty eroded the Romans' will to resist invasion and that the *pax Romana* led to military indiscipline.

These influences can be reinterpreted as parts of a larger process of internal decay and foreign invasion. Internal decay resulted from extravagant aristocratic spending and the over-taxing of provincial agriculture. Poor farmers increasingly resented the rising income inequality. Together with increased religious dissension, exemplified by persecution of Christians in the mid-3rd century, economic disparities created social unrest.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Museum_Thetford_Hoard_Rings.jpg>

*Gold Jewelry from the Thetford Hoard –
The Privilege of Ruling in the Roman Empire*

Tight central political control might have staved off those growing pressures. But Rome instead experienced political instability.

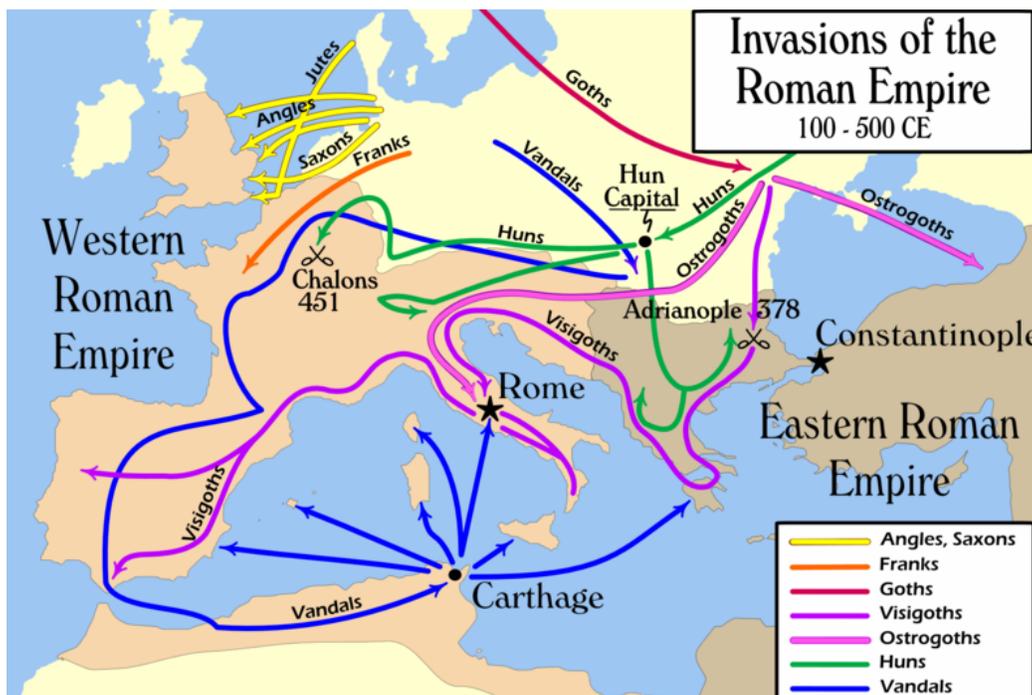
Provincial military commanders vied for central leadership and caused imperial succession crises. Provincial residents resented Roman taxation.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amphi-Rome.PNG>

230 Amphitheatres of the Roman Empire, mid-3rd century CE – Constructed Mostly With Agricultural Taxes, Creating Instability

Political instability was coupled with a loss of military strength, especially in the Roman west. To keep their estates operating, western aristocrats substituted cash for troops, exacerbating military manpower shortages. Rome thus became ripe for foreign invasion. Fierce Barbarian invaders from central and northern Europe – Vandals, Anglo-Saxons, Visigoths, Franks, and Ostrogoths – took advantage of Roman military weakness, inflicted large losses on Roman armies, and dismembered the Roman Empire.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Invasions_of_the_Roman_Empire_1.png>

Invasions of the Roman Empire from Central and Northern Europe – Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Goths, Huns, Ostrogoths, Vandals, and Visigoths

During the ensuing Dark Ages and Medieval Period, Europe largely abandoned Roman technology, education, law, and long-distance trade. It took over 1,200 years before any parts of Europe achieved standards of living comparable to those enjoyed by the Romans when the empire was thriving.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe_and_the_Near_East_at_476_AD.png>

*Western Europe and the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire –
After the Fall of the Western Roman Empire, 476*

The Byzantine Empire (330-1453)

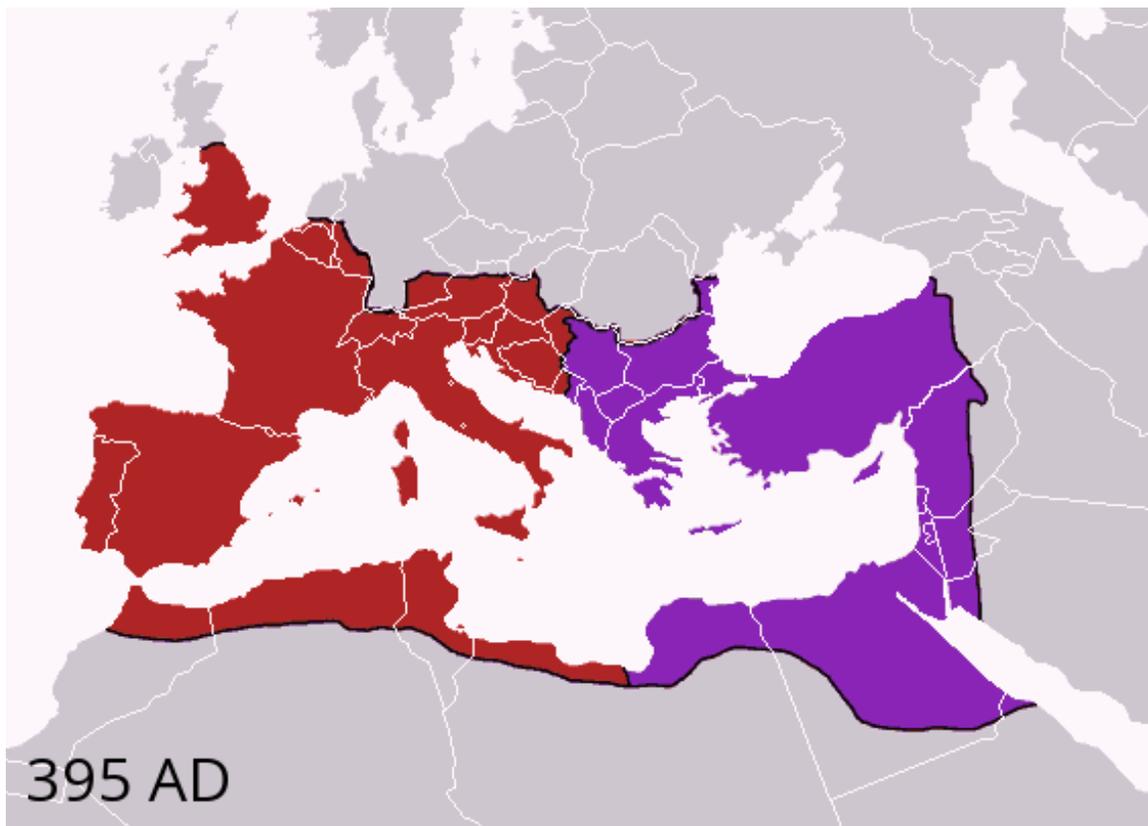
Creation of the Byzantine Empire (4th-6th centuries). Diocletian in 284 instituted the Tetrarchy, simultaneous rule by four emperors. In 307, Constantine I (The Great) became a co-emperor, and in 324 he ended the Tetrarchy, re-instituted hereditary succession, and served as sole Roman Emperor until his death in 337. Although only about ten percent of his subjects were Christians, Constantine converted to Christianity and ended official persecution of Christians.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rome-Capitole-StatueConstantin.jpg>>

*Roman Emperor Constantine the Great (Ruled 307-337),
Founder of Constantinople – Capitoline Museum, Rome*

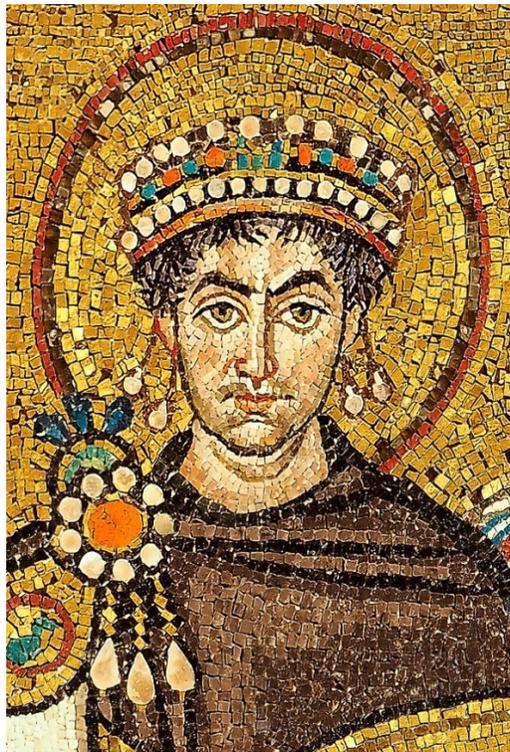
Constantine later built an impregnable fortress in Constantinople (Byzantium) to control the Bosphorus straits and be closer to eastern trade routes and Rome's principal foe, Sasanid Persia. In 330, he transferred the capital of the Roman Empire to his new city. That action divided the Roman Empire in two and created the Byzantine Empire as the eastern half.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theodosius_I%27s_empire.png>

*The Roman Empire After Division by Theodosius I in 395 CE –
Western Roman Empire (Red) and Byzantine Empire (Purple)*

After the Western Roman Empire, based in Rome, fell in 476, all Byzantine emperors hoped to reunite the former empire. Justinian I, who ruled Byzantium between 527 and 565, achieved that goal, but at a very high cost. To protect his vulnerable eastern flank, he secured peace with Persia in 532 by paying a large annual tribute.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Justinianus_I_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Justinianus_I_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_(Ravenna).jpg)

Byzantine Emperor Justinian I (Ruled 527-565) – Contemporary Portrait Mosaic in the Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy

Justinian then dispatched his brilliant general, Belisarius, on a series of costly campaigns between 533 and 552 to conquer (and re-

conquer) North Africa (Carthage) from the Vandals and Sicily and Italy from the Goths. Justinian was also an avid builder of fortresses, monuments, and churches, including St. Sophia and St. Eirene in Constantinople. He was a far-seeing promoter of the arts, Eastern trade, and silk production (using silkworms smuggled from China).



*Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Mars_2013.jpg>*

*Hagia Sophia (St. Sophia), Constantinople (Now Istanbul) –
The Largest Christian Church in the Byzantine Empire*

But Justinian’s warfare, tribute, and building projects drained the Byzantine economy, and his territorial gains were soon lost. He looked west when he should have looked east.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
 <<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Justinian555AD.png>>

*The Byzantine Empire At Its Greatest Extent –
 After Emperor Justinian’s Reconquest, 555*

Sources of Byzantine Wealth. Crop agriculture was the principal source of wealth for Byzantium, financing warfare and government. Peasant farmers in the Byzantine Empire faced two concerns – feeding their families by diversifying their crop mix, and paying share rents to landowners and taxes to government. Their main crops – cereals (wheat, barley, millet), pulses (peas, lentils), and specialty crops (wine, olives, fruits) – originated in the Fertile Crescent. Most growth in agriculture arose from expansion of cropped area because technical change in

farming was limited. The leading areas for grain exports were Thrace and Macedonia.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wheat_close-up.JPG>

*Wheat (Triticum aestivum) –
Food Staple in Anatolia Since Agriculture Began 10,500 Years Ago*

Livestock production was a secondary source of Byzantine wealth. Peasants kept animals for use in crop production – oxen for draft and donkeys for transportation. Large landowners on estates grazed horses and cattle extensively, using natural pastures. The state raised horses for the army's cavalry. Much of the extensive grazing of animals occurred on the Anatolian Plateau, which had low human population densities and

good natural pastures. Herds had to be mobile to avoid predatory raids from nomadic peoples.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Byzantinischer_Mosaizist_des_5._Jahrhunderts_002.jpg>

*Byzantine Youth Feeding His Donkey –
Mosaic, Great Palace of Constantinople, 5th century*

The Byzantine government also gained considerable wealth

The Byzantine government gained considerable wealth from foreign trade. It took advantage of the strategic location of Constantinople to tax the lucrative trade between the Aegean and Black

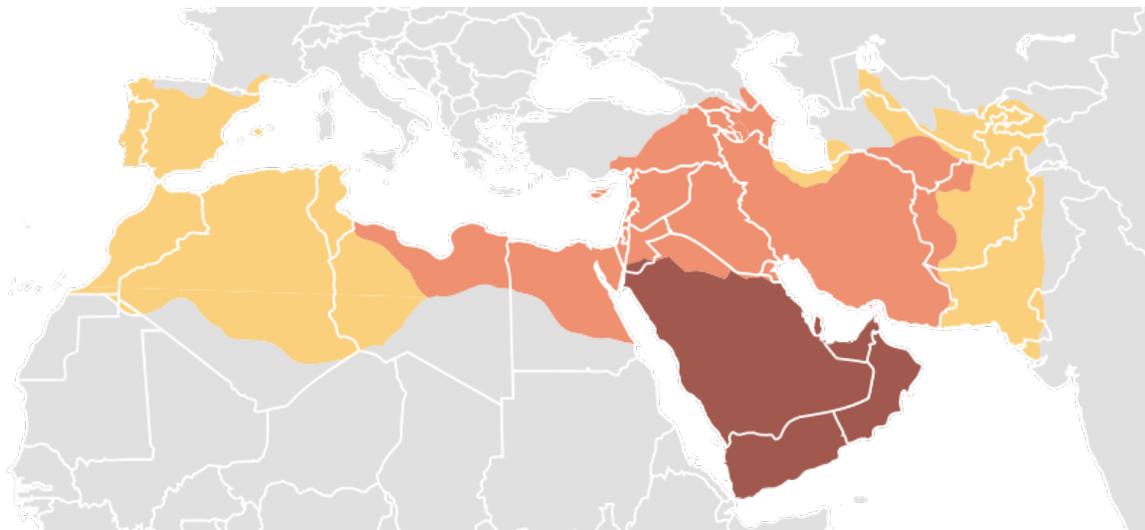
Seas. Grain, meat, furs, and fish were exported from Russia and the Crimea while wine, olive oil, fruits, and luxury goods were imported into the Black Sea region. The government taxed those transshipments and Byzantine trade and monopolized commerce in iron, silk, and arms. Foreign conquest was not an important source of wealth for Byzantium because the costs of Byzantine re-conquests of Mediterranean regions exceeded the tribute or taxes collected.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons* available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Morus_alba_-_Tehran.JPG>

*Mulberry Tree (Morus alba), Indigenous to North China,
Is Fed To Silk Worms (Bombyx mori) –
Both Introduced in the Byzantine Empire in the 6th century*

Muslim Expansion and Christian Crusades. Between the 7th and 13th centuries, the Byzantine Empire was gradually dismembered because of invasions by Muslim Arabs, European Crusaders, and Seljuk Turks. The Arab Muslim diaspora began in 634, after the death of Muhammad, and within a century Islam spread to Spain in the west and India in the east. Byzantium was vulnerable to Arab invasion because of wars with Sasanian Persia, devastations from plague, and opposition in many provinces. The Arab invaders shrunk the Byzantine Empire by capturing Syria, Egypt, and North Africa.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_expansion_of_Caliphate.svg>

*The Muslim Arab Diaspora –
622-632 (Dark Red), 632-661 (Light Red), 661-750 (Yellow)*

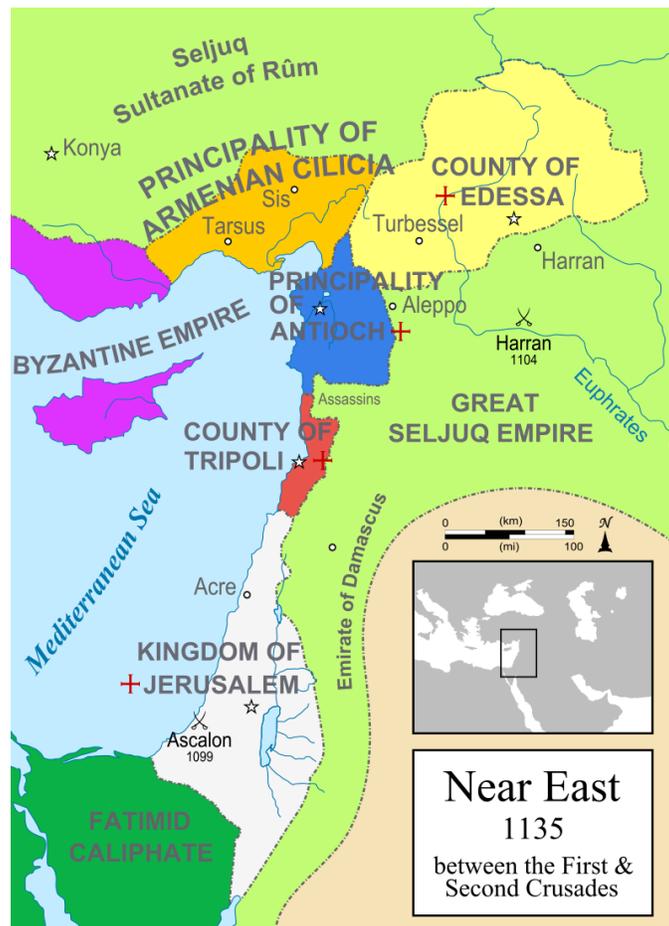
Byzantium was vulnerable to Arab invasion because of wars with Sasanian Persia, devastations from plague, and opposition in many provinces. The Arab invaders shrunk the Byzantine Empire by capturing Syria, Egypt, and North Africa. Arab invaders besieged Constantinople twice, in 674-679 and in 717-718, but the Byzantines won both battles. Muslim pressure against Byzantium lessened in the mid-8th century when the Islamic caliphate shifted from Damascus to Baghdad. For the next three centuries, the Byzantines usually controlled most of Anatolia, while the Muslims generally held Syria.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abbasids850.png>>

The Abbasid Caliphate At Its Peak , c. 850 – Arabs Retained Titular leadership, But Real Power Was Wielded by Non-Arabs

The Crusades, military expeditions by European Christians to control the Holy Land, were a disaster for Byzantium. En route to Jerusalem, the unruly Crusaders ravaged crops, plundered villages, and raped women in the Byzantine Empire. The First Crusade (1096-1099) was successful in capturing Jerusalem, but the Crusaders slaughtered the Muslim and Jewish residents of the Holy City.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Crusader_states_1135-en.svg

Crusader States in the Levant, 1135

The Second Crusade (1147-1149) was a fiasco because Turkish armies annihilated the German Crusaders. The Third Crusade (1190-1192) led to a small Crusader kingdom but it excluded Jerusalem. The Fourth Crusade (1202-1204) was an invasion of Constantinople to pay Venice for the fleet it had supplied to the Frankish Crusaders. The Franks plundered the city, Venice claimed trading privileges along with ports and Crete, and the Byzantine Empire never recovered.

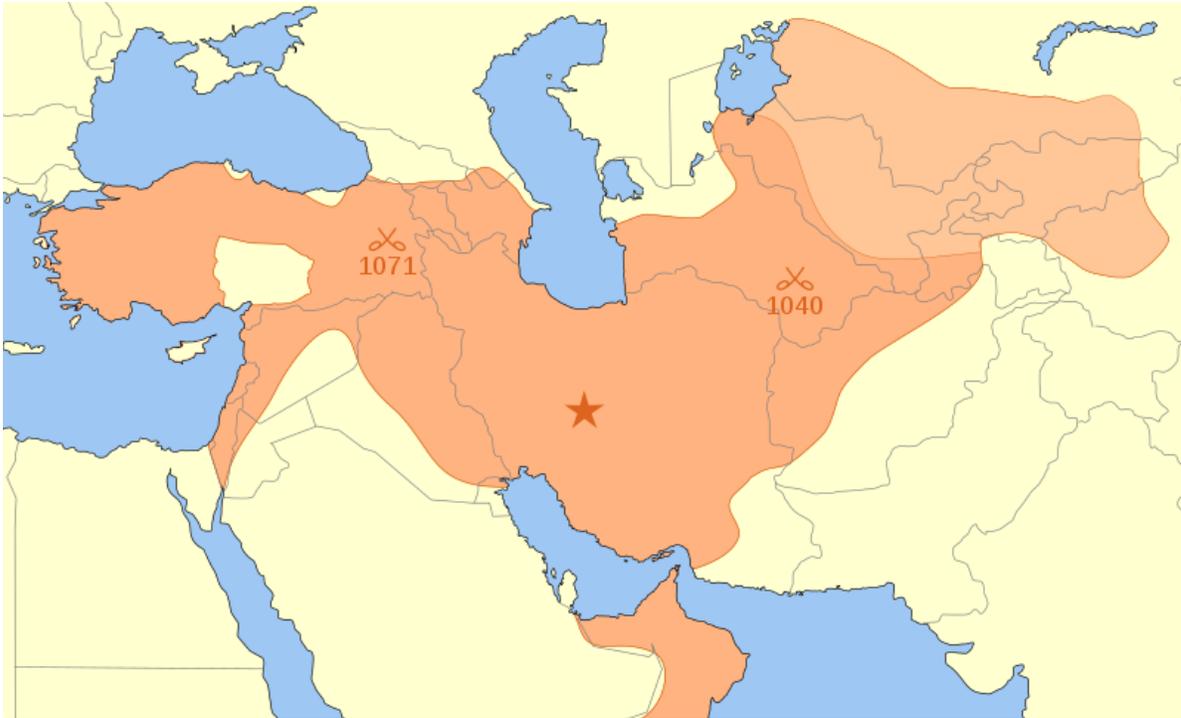


Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PriseDeConstantinople1204PalmaLeJeune.JPG>>

*Crusaders and Venetians Besieged Constantinople,
Fourth Crusade, 1202-1204 –
The Taking of Constantinople, By Palma Le Jeune*

Seljuk Turkish Migrations and Byzantine Decline. The migrations of Seljuk Turks into Anatolia in the 11th-13th centuries ultimately ensured the fall of the declining Byzantine Empire. The Seljuks first enter recorded history as nomads in Central Asia (Transoxiana) who converted to Islam in the 10th century. Their skill as horse-based warriors allowed the Seljuks to take control of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad in 1055. Their unrealized goal was to conquer Egypt and overthrow its heretical Fatimid (Shiite) rulers. In 1064, Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan invaded Anatolia, conquering Armenia and sacking Cappadocia.

At the pivotal Battle of Manzikert in eastern Anatolia (1071), Alp Arslan annihilated the Byzantine army and captured the emperor, Romanus IV. In the peace settlement, the victorious Seljuks demanded only four eastern Byzantine cities and an annual tribute for the ransomed emperor. But the epic battle opened eastern Anatolia to waves of Turkish migrations. The Seljuks set up the Sultanate of Rum in Anatolia in 1080. The territory and power of the Sultanate peaked under Alauddin Kaykubad (1219-1236).



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seljuk_Empire_locator_map.svg>

The Seljuk Turkish Empire At Its Greatest Territorial Extent, 1092

Invading Mongol warriors destroyed the Seljuk Sultanate in 1243. Hulegu, a grandson of Genghis Khan, ended the Seljuk-run Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad and created the Il-Khanate (1256-1335) to govern Persia and the Tigris-Euphrates region. The Mongol incursions created a second massive wave of Turkish migrations of refugees and soldiers into Anatolia.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hulagu_Khan.jpg>

*Hulegu Khan, Ghengis Khan's Grandson,
After the Mongol Sack of Baghdad, 1258 –
Painting By Rashid-al-Din Hamadani, early 14th century*

By 1300, the Byzantine Empire was in severe decline. In Anatolia, the Byzantines controlled only Constantinople, a half-dozen major western cities, and a few Black Sea ports. The remainder of Anatolia was inhabited by numerous unorganized Turkish tribes, awaiting political re-organization.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Asia_in_1335.svg>

*The Four Khanates of the Mongol Empire –
Yuan Dynasty, Chagatai Khanate, Ilkhanate, and Golden Horde, 1335*

The Ottoman Empire (1300-1923)

Ottoman Origins (14th century). In 1300, the Ottoman *beylik* was one of several small Turkish Muslim kingdoms in Anatolia, nominally under the rule of a Seljuk sultan and a Mongol Ilkhan (in Tabriz). Osman (ruled 1300-1326), a talented soldier and administrator, was the founding father of the Ottoman Empire. The keys to Ottoman success were the skilled use of *ghazi* warriors, seeking better pastures and fiefdoms, and religious tolerance for the Orthodox Christian Greek majority in western Anatolia.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ottoman_Sipahi_Melchior_Lorch_\(1646\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ottoman_Sipahi_Melchior_Lorch_(1646).jpg)>

*Ottoman Sipahi (Cavalry Warrior) –
Woodcut Engraving By Melchior Lorch, 1646*

Orkhan (ruled 1326-1360) expanded the state that his father began.

The Ottoman *beylik* abutted the shrunken Byzantine Empire. In the 1330s and 1340s, Orkhan conquered almost all of Byzantium, except Constantinople, and treated its Greek Orthodox residents well. In the 1350s, Orkhan expanded into Thrace, in nearby southeastern Europe, and resettled Anatolian Turks there.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:3_Murad_I_map.PNG>

*Early Ottoman Conquests, 1301-1389 –
By 1361 (Dark Red), By 1389 (Red), Vassal States (Pink)*

Murad I (ruled 1360-1389) built the Ottoman Empire in southeastern Europe through conquest and diplomacy. He established the first imperial province, Rumelia, and placed his capital at Edirne (in Thrace) in 1365. Murad next took advantage of rivalries among the Balkan fiefdoms to conquer Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Serbia. He defeated a Balkan coalition, led by Lazar of Serbia, at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 to cement Ottoman control.

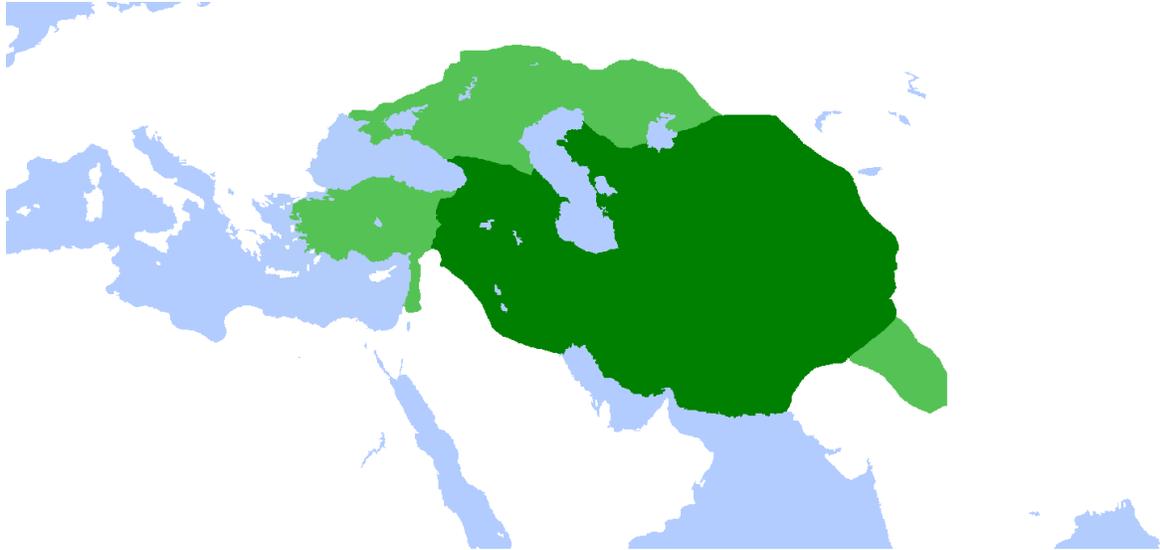


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Murat_H%C3%BCdavendigar.jpg>

Sultan Murad I, 1362-1389 – Established the Important Ottoman Province of Rumelia in Southeastern Europe

Murad's son, Bayezid I (ruled 1389-1403), was called the Thunderbolt because of his unexpected pattern of conquest. Bayezid routed a band of Hungarian and French Crusaders at the Battle of Nicopolis in 1396 to ensure Ottoman rule in southeastern Europe. He then went on to claim much of central-eastern Anatolia and form the Ottoman province of Anatolia. At his death in 1403, the Ottoman Empire consisted of 267,000 square miles, two-thirds in Anatolia and one-third in Europe.

Ottoman Expansion (15th century). The fledgling Ottoman Empire nearly ended in the early 15th century. Bayezid had conquered large swaths of Anatolia but had failed to consolidate his control. Moreover, he taunted Timur of Samarkand, who had conquered much of Central Asia. Timur rose to Bayezid's challenge, destroyed the Turkish army at the Battle of Ankara in 1402, and captured and later killed Bayezid. Timur died in 1405, while planning an assault on China, and his empire quickly disintegrated.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
< https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Timurid_Empire_Map.png >

Timur's Empire – At His Death, 1405

Murad II (ruled 1421-1451) then rebuilt the Ottoman state and expanded it by taking the key Macedonian port of Salonika from Venice in 1430. His son, Mehmed II (The Conqueror, ruled 1451-1481), successfully besieged Constantinople in 1453, and its fall sounded the final death knell of the Byzantine Empire. By then, Constantinople was a poor city of only 40,000 residents, and it had just 7,000 men to defend 14 miles of city walls. After a courageous defense, the city fell to Mehmed's 300,000 troops, who attacked by land and sea.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Walls_of_Constantinople.JPG>

*The Restored Land Walls of Istanbul –
Re-built by Sultan Mehmed II, Late 15th century*

Mehmed styled himself as the Sovereign of Two Lands (Anatolia and Rumelia) and Two Seas (Mediterranean and Black). He expanded Ottoman control in the Balkans in the 1460s by taking Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Albania, and Greece. In the 1470s, Mehmed ensured Ottoman control of the Black Sea region by conquering northern Anatolia (including the Byzantine state of Trebizond) and by subjugating the Crimean Tatars to vassalage.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:OttomanEmpire1481.png>>

*The Ottoman Empire in 1481 – Two Lands (Rumelia and Anatolia)
and Two Seas (Black and Mediterranean)*

Mehmed's ruling strategy was to create a cosmopolitan

Mehmed's ruling strategy was to create a cosmopolitan empire.

He rebuilt Istanbul (Constantinople) as a new city of half a million multi-ethnic residents, only half Turkish. Mehmed also was a devoted scholar, who spoke six languages fluently, had a deep interest in technology, and was a patron of the humanities and arts.

Ottoman Peak (16th century). Selim I (The Grim, 1511-1520) was an efficient expansionist into Asia and Africa. In the Battle of

Caldiran, 1514, he bested Shah Ismail, the leader of Shi'ite Safavid Persia, and claimed Azerbaijan. Between 1515 and 1517, Selim defeated the Mamluks and incorporated Syria, Egypt, and Western Arabia into the empire, paving the way for further expansion across North Africa.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Chaldiran_\(1514\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Chaldiran_(1514).jpg)>

Ottoman Turkish Cavalry, Defeating Ismail's Safavid Army, Battle of Chaldiran, 1514 – From Chehel Sotoun Palace, Isfahan, Iran

Selim's son, Suleiman I (The Magnificent or The Legislator, 1520-1566) was the Ottoman Empire's greatest sultan. His army defeated

Charles V, the Habsburg Emperor and King of Spain, in the critical Battle of Mohacs in 1526. He negotiated a secret mutual defense pact, against the Habsburgs, with Francis I of France in the Turco-French Treaty of 1536. Hungary became an Ottoman vassal in 1543, and the Ottomans maintained control of Hungary for 150 years.



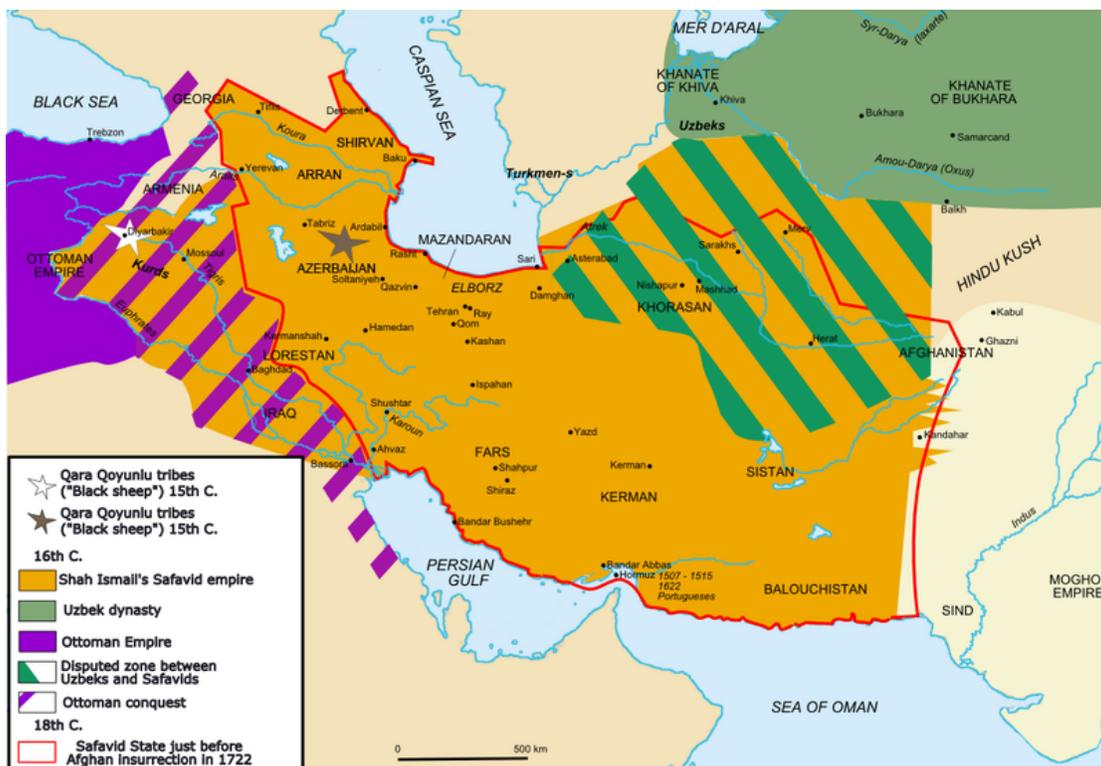
Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EmperorSuleiman.jpg>>

*Suleiman I (The Magnificent or The Legislator, Ruled 1521-1566) –
The Ottoman Empire’s Greatest Sultan*

Suleiman personally led three campaigns against Persia, the Ottomans’ arch enemy on the eastern front, between 1534 and 1554,

adding southern Mesopotamia, including Baghdad, to his empire.

Suleiman also oversaw a full codification of Sultanic and Quranic law, which clarified the rights, duties, and codes of conduct for both Muslims and non-Muslims.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Safavid_persia.png>

The Safavid Persian Empire (1501-1722) – Disputes with Ottomans (Purple) and Uzbeks (Green)

Suleiman's son, Selim II (The Sot, 1566-1574), was a weak leader and an enthusiast of wines, especially those from Cyprus. In 1570-1571, he invaded Cyprus, then owned by Venice, and precipitated the

formation of a Holy League of Christian European states. Cyprus fell before the League's navy arrived.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sultan_Selim_II.jpg>

*Sultan Selim II (The Sot, Ruled 1566-1574) –
Admirer of Cypriot Wine*

But the two navies met at the Battle of Lepanto (1571) in Greece's Gulf of Corinth. The Ottomans lost 200 ships and suffered their first major defeat. They rebuilt their naval strength to 250 ships by 1573, but both sides soon abandoned the costly sea battle to control the Mediterranean. Despite Lepanto, the Ottomans ended the 16th century with the strongest navy in the Mediterranean.

Sources of Wealth – Agriculture. Food agriculture was the primary source of wealth in the Ottoman Empire. During the Ottoman era, agriculture continued to be practiced much as it had been under the Roman and Byzantine Empires. The major crops were cereals (wheat and barley), olives, and grapes, and the principal animal products and services came from raising cattle, horses, and sheep. The key agricultural regions in the Ottoman Empire were those that supported the largest rural populations – the Balkans, Hungary, the Anatolian valleys, and the Nile Valley of Egypt.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Oliven_V1.jpg>

*Olive Oil –
Major Export from Turkey, Five Centuries Ago and Today*

Farm structure in the Ottoman heartland (Anatolia and the Balkans) was small (12-40 acres) reflecting the state-sponsored feudal organization. The state owned the land (*miri*). The government allocated the land to peasant (*raya*) households who farmed it and received rights of perpetual tenancy (which passed through the male line). The government allocated rights to collect certain taxes (*timars*) to military officers (*sipahis*) who retained a portion of the tax revenues in return for their military service.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Vienna.Sipahis.jpg>

Ottoman Light Cavalrymen (Sipahis) Collected Taxes (Timars)

The profit per acre farmed did not change much because there was little new agricultural technology. To broaden the tax base, the government had to expand farmed area through resettlement or reclamation schemes. Survey registers indicate that both land under production and tax revenue peaked in the 16th century when the government was aggressively expanding farmed area. Farmers paid taxes equal to 10 percent of the expected value of farm output. The tax liability was calculated from cadastral surveys that registered crops, cropped area, and yields and from averages of recent regional prices. Farmers could earn tax exemptions if they farmed reclaimed land or if they gave gifts to tax-free Islamic foundations (*vakifs*).

Sources of Wealth – Foreign Trade. The earnings from foreign trade provided an important supplementary source of wealth for the Ottoman Empire. Its principal exports were cloth – silk from Bursa, cotton from Anatolia, and mohair from Ankara – carpets, furs, and bees' wax. The Ottomans imported grain and meat (from Russia), fine woolen cloth (from Florence), raw silk (from Iran), metals (from Europe), and slaves (Caucasians and Africans). Although a few of the merchants

were Turkish, most were Greeks and Jews, notably Marrano Jewish immigrants (exiles from Catholic Spain and Portugal).

Ottoman trade was centered in three cities in northwestern Anatolia – Bursa (14th-16th centuries), Istanbul (16th-19th centuries), and Izmir (Smyrna, 17th-19th centuries). Those three cities specialized in transit trade, transshipping goods made elsewhere along with products of the empire. Bursa and Izmir were the Ottoman entrepôts on the lucrative Asia-Europe trade routes in which Indian spices (especially pepper) and Iranian raw silk were exchanged for European fine woolen cloth.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:UluCami,Bursa_-_panoramio.jpg>

*Grand Mosque (Ulu Cami), Bursa –
First Ottoman Capital and Later Silk Production Center*

Istanbul was the nexus of the critical Black Sea trading system in which Russian and Danubian grain, meat, and furs moved south and Turkish silk, cotton, and woolen cloth moved north. Ottoman government intervention in trade was limited, except for state monopolies on salt, soap, candle wax, and armaments.

The government imposed trade taxes at a rate usually of 20 percent on both imports and exports and either auctioned the taxing rights to consortia of financiers (tax farmers) or appointed government tax collectors (*emins*). Through capitulation treaties with France (1534), England (1580), and the Netherlands (1612), the Ottoman government negotiated mutual trading privileges and extraterritoriality rights.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Islamic_Gunpowder_Empires.jpg

The Ottoman (Red), Safavid (Purple), and Mughal (Orange) Empires – c. 1700

Sources of Wealth – Foreign Conquest. Foreign conquest was a major source of Ottoman wealth. The Empire began with a military ethos – conquest in an Islamic jihad created Sultanic pride and personal prestige for warriors. But the main imperial motive was financial gain by collecting booty, tribute, or taxes. Between the 14th and 16th centuries, the Ottoman Empire had better discipline, training, military intelligence, and field mobility than its foes did.

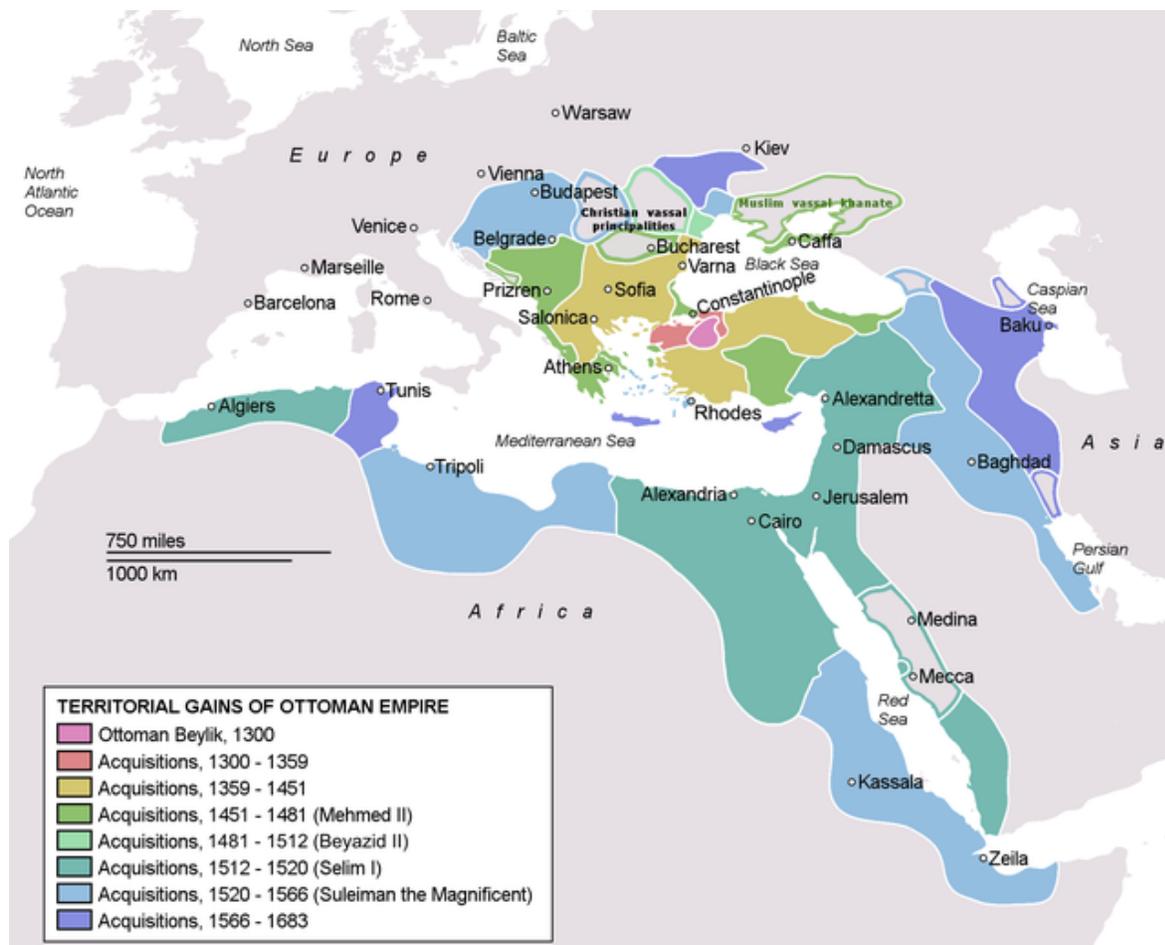
The standing infantry consisted of *janisaries* – well-schooled products of a tribute system in which Christian families in the Balkans provided boys for training and conversion to Islam. The light cavalry was manned by *sipahis* – Turkish Muslims who often received feudal *timar* grants to collect land taxes as their pay. The Turkish artillery had cutting-edge heavy cannons. Attacks in the field were led by masses of irregulars who played the unenviable role of cannon fodder.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ottoman_armour_1480-1500.jpg>

The Armor of a Sipahi, Turkish Light Cavalryman, c. 1500

Ottoman conquest occurred in two phases – of the heartland (Southeastern Europe and Anatolia) in the 14th and 15th centuries, and of Syria, Egypt, Arabia, North Africa, and Mesopotamia in the 16th century. The Ottomans could not conquer Austria and Persia because their lines of supply and communication were overextended.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:OttomanEmpireIn1683.png>

Expansion of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1683

The pragmatic Ottoman rulers employed different modes of governance and taxation in their two areas of conquest. In the heartland, they settled Turks, organized ethnic *millet*s (self-governing units), assimilated diverse cultures, and taxed heavily. But in Asia and Africa, they sought to pacify existing Islamic cultures, rule indirectly (using Ottoman governors and local administrations), and effect only moderate tax transfers to Istanbul. That complex system of control began to unravel during the end of the 16th century when the Empire experienced poor leadership.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ottoman_Mamluk_horseman_circa_1550.jpg>

Ottoman Mamluk Horseman, c. 1550 – Mamluk Officers Controlled the Military and Bureaucracy in Ottoman Egypt

Ottoman Decline (17th and 18th centuries). The Battle of Vienna (1683) was the Ottoman Empire's first loss of territory to Christian foes. The Pope then engineered a Holy League (Austria, Poland, and Venice) that administered a series of humiliating defeats on the Ottomans. In the Treaty of Karlowitz, 1699, Austria re-took Hungary and Transylvania, Poland regained Podolia, Venice re-claimed much of Greece and parts of Dalmatia, and Russia got the Sea of Azov area on the Black Sea. Thereafter, the Ottoman Empire was on the defensive.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Vienna_1683_11.PNG>

*Ottoman Army Losing the Battle of Vienna, 1683 –
Ottoman Military Strategy Remained Unchanged Until the 19th century*

The 18th century began well for the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans decisively defeated Peter the Great of Russia at the Battle of Prut, 1709, regained the Azov region, and turned Peter's attention toward the Baltic. In 1718, the Ottomans ended Venice's long run as an imperial power in the eastern Mediterranean and re-claimed the parts of Greece and Dalmatia that they had lost two decades earlier.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean-Marc_Nattier,_Pierre_Ier_\(1717\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean-Marc_Nattier,_Pierre_Ier_(1717).jpg)>

Tsar Peter the Great of Russia, Defeated by the Ottomans at the Battle of Prut, 1709 – Portrait By Jean-Marc Nattier, 1717

Then weak leadership was reflected in a series of military setbacks, and the Ottoman Empire grew increasingly dependent on foreign desires to keep it alive. In 1790, after the French Revolution, England, Prussia, and Holland formed a triple alliance to prop up the Ottoman Empire and preserve its territorial integrity. Despite Ottoman losses in battles, in the Treaty of Sistova, 1790, Austria agreed to restore all of its conquests to the pre-war status.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Catherine_II_by_J.B.Lampi_\(1780s,_Kunsthistorisches_Museum\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Catherine_II_by_J.B.Lampi_(1780s,_Kunsthistorisches_Museum).jpg)

*Empress Catherine the Great, Russian Expansionist –
Gained Territory on the Black Sea from the Ottoman Empire*

Similarly, in the Treaty of Jassy, 1791, Catherine the Great of Russia set her border with the Ottoman Empire at the Dniester River, ceding conquests west of it but retaining control of the north coast of the Black Sea. Sultan Selim III (1793-1808) introduced the New Order of reforms that stressed more military training and less power for the *ulemas*. But Selim was overthrown and executed.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Joseph_Warnia-Zarzecki_-_Sultan_Selim_III_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg>

*Sultan Selim III (1789-1807) –
Posthumous Portrait By Joseph Warnia-Zarzecki, 1850*

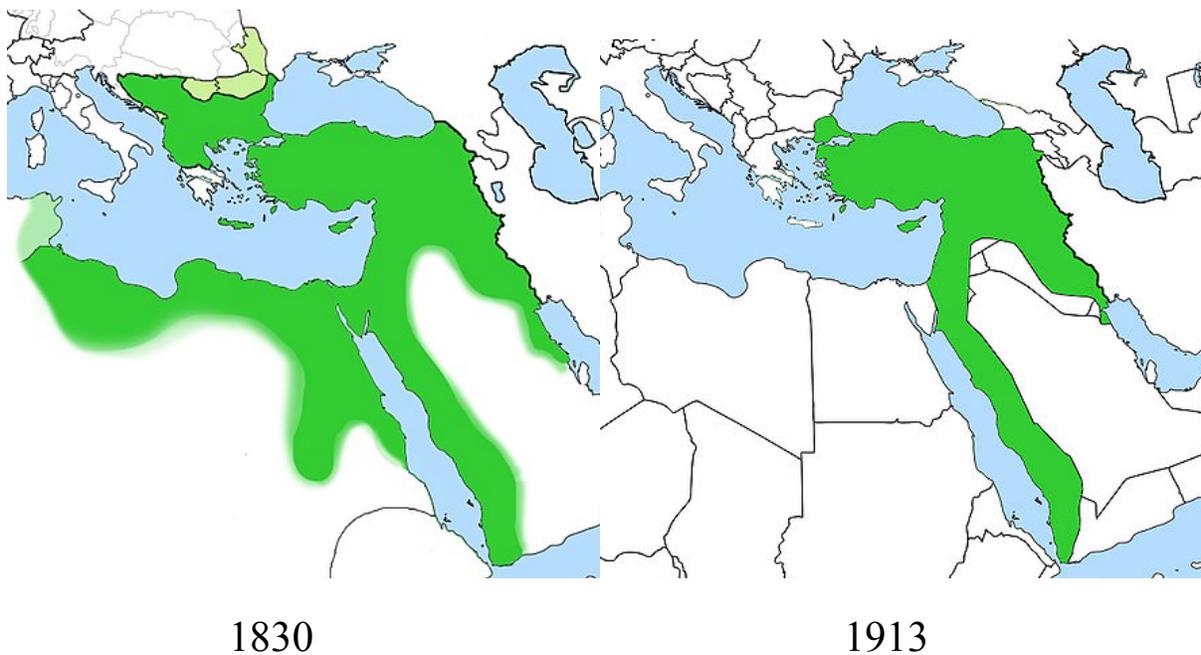
Ottoman Dismemberment (19th and early 20th centuries). The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire began in 1830 with the independence of Greece. Britain and France joined the Ottomans to defeat Russia in the Crimean War (1853-1856). Ottoman armies, led by British officers, did most of the fighting. The Treaty of Paris (1856) called for open navigation of the Danube and the Black Sea and for all Christian nations to preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Territorial_Expansion_of_Greece_from_1832%E2%80%931947.gif

Independent Kingdom of Greece (Dark Blue Area) – Following the Treaty of Constantinople (1832)

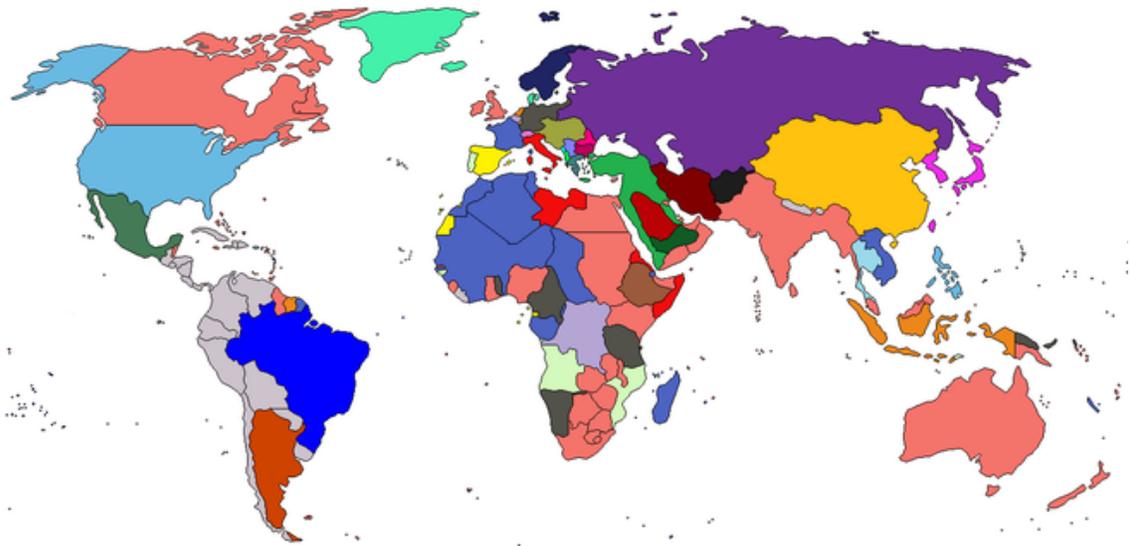
But Ottoman dismemberment accelerated. The largest loss of Ottoman territory in Europe was sanctioned by the Treaty of Berlin (1878) – Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro became independent, Bosnia-Herzegovina went to Austria-Hungary, Cyprus to Britain, and eastern Anatolia to Russia. Bulgaria received its independence in 1913, following the Balkan Wars.



Sources: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Territorial_changes_of_the_Ottoman_Empire_1830.jpg> and
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Territorial_changes_of_the_Ottoman_Empire_1913b.jpg>

The Declining Ottoman Empire in 1830 and in 1913

The Young Turk movement began as a rebellion of army officers in 1908, transformed into a political party in 1909, and took over the government in a coup in 1913. The Young Turks introduced significant reforms, but they also were responsible for the tragic massacre of one million Armenians in 1915-1916, ostensibly because of their support of Russia in World War I.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:World_empires_and_colonies_around_World_War_I.png

World Empires, 1914 – Ottoman (Green), British (Light Red), French (Dark Blue), Russian (Purple)

World War I (1914-1918) was the product of two entangling alliances – the Triple Entente (Britain, France, and Russia) versus the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary). The Young Turks

signed a secret pact with Germany after Britain and France, preferring Russia as an ally, rebuffed their overtures to join the Entente. The loss of the First World War sounded the final death knell for the Ottoman Empire. The fall (in 1923) of the Ottoman Empire was largely the result of poor military and economic leadership. But the Ottomans and Young Turks also failed to adjust to changing international realities.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Europe_alliances_1914-en.svg>

*Triple Entente and Triple Alliance (Central Powers) in World War One
– The Ottoman Empire Later Joined the Triple Alliance*

Time Line for the Mediterranean Empires

from 8500 BCE	origins of agriculture – Fertile Crescent
5000-3000 BCE	rise of irrigated agriculture – Tigris-Euphrates and Nile Valleys/Deltas
2000 BCE	Achaean Greeks began migrating from Central Asia into Greece – evolved into Mycenaeans
1950-1200 BCE	Minoan Crete in eastern Mediterranean – four large palace complexes
1700-1200 BCE	Hittite Kingdom in Anatolia, northern Syria – destroyed by Sea Peoples
1628 BCE	volcanic eruption and earthquakes on Thera (Santorini) – led to decline of Minoan civilization
1600-1200 BCE	Mycenean Greece in eastern Mediterranean
1450 BCE	Mycenaeans invaded and ruled Crete – Minoan palaces destroyed
c. 1200 BCE	Mycenaean society collapsed – after devastating earthquakes
1100-750 BCE	Dark Age in Ancient Greece
11th-6th c. BCE	Greek city-states founded on Aegean and Black Sea coasts
750-500 BCE	Archaic Age in Greece

8th-6th c. BCE	Greek city-states founded in northern Mediterranean and Sicily
587 BCE	Nebuchadrezzar of Babylonia destroyed Jerusalem – deported Israelite population to Babylonia
547-333 BCE	Achaemenid Persian Empire rule in Anatolia
539 BCE	Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylonia – permitted Israelites to return home – 40,000 returnees re-built Jerusalem
509 BCE	Rome founded
500-338 BCE	Classical Age in Greece
490-479 BCE	Greece stymied Achaemenid Persian invasions and wins Persian War
431-404 BCE	Peloponnesian War – Sparta defeated Athens, war sapped Greek vitality
338 BCE	Battle of Chaeronea – Philip II of Macedonia defeated Athens and Thebes
338-146 BCE	Macedonian rule in Greece
336-323 BCE	Alexander the Great ruled Greece as King of Macedonia
333 BCE	Battle of Issus – Alexander the Great of Macedonia defeated Darius III of Persia

333-130 BCE	Antigonid, Seleucid and Ptolemaic Kingdoms rule in eastern Mediterranean
332 BCE-640 CE	Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Era – Greek was official language
late 3 rd century BCE	Romans defeated Hannibal of Carthage – gained control of Sicily, Sardinia, and Iberia
146 BCE	Roman conquest of Greece
146 BCE-330 CE	Roman Empire rule in Eastern Mediterranean
121 BCE	Rome conquered Provence
64-62 BCE	Pompey the Great of Rome destroyed Seleucid Kingdom – Rome ruled Syria
62-50 BCE	First Triumvirate of the Roman Empire – Gnaeus Pompey, Julius Caesar, and Marcus Crassus ruled jointly
58-51 BCE	Julius Caesar conquered Gaul – Gaul supplied Rome with wine and wheat
49-44 BCE	Julius Caesar – Dictator of Rome – founded 30 settler colonies in new Roman provinces – assassinated in 44 BC
44-31 BCE	Second Triumvirate of the Roman Empire – Octavian, Mark Antony, and Aemilius Lepidus ruled jointly

31 BCE	Naval Battle of Actium – Octavian of Rome defeated Antony of Rome and Cleopatra of Egypt
30 BCE	Octavian invaded Egypt – Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide – Egypt became Roman province
27 BCE	Octavian formed Roman Principate – changed his name to Augustus Caesar – declared himself first Roman emperor
27 BCE-476 CE	Roman Principate – military prowess decided succession of emperors
27 BCE-14 CE	Emperor Augustus ruled Rome – expanded empire to natural frontiers – Rhine, Danube, Sahara, Atlantic
43 CE	Emperor Claudius conquered Britain
80	Emperor Titus opened Roman Colloseum
98-117	Emperor Trajan ruled – annexed Dacia (modern Romania) and Petra in 106, Armenia and northern Mesopotamia in 114
117-138	Emperor Hadrian ruled – built Hadrian’s Wall in Britain – erected timber palisade between Rhine and Danube Rivers
135	Roman rulers exiled nearly all Israelites – after series of rebellions against Roman rule

- 268-283 Illyrian Emperors Claudius II, Aurelian, and Carus ruled – recaptured Gaul, Syria, Danube – averted empire’s collapse
- 270-271 Queen Zenobia conquered Roman provinces – Syria, Roman Arabia, Palestine, Egypt, and half of Asia Minor
- 272 Emperor Aurelian re-conquered Roman east – besieged Palmyra – captured Zenobia – exiled her to Rome
- 284-324 Tetrarchy – shared rule under four simultaneous emperors –Tetrarchs strengthened military – revived economy
- 307-337 Emperor Constantine I ruled – ended Tetrarchy – built a new eastern capital at Constantinople – converted to Christianity
- 330-1453 Byzantine Empire ruled in eastern Mediterranean
- 378 Battle of Hadrianople (modern Edirne, Turkey) – Goths annihilated Romans – Rome lost two-thirds of its army
- 395 Emperor Theodoseus I divided Roman Empire – Eastern Mediterranean governed from Constantinople
- 395-641 Byzantine Empire – eastern Roman Empire – ruled Levant

- 418-439 Germanic Vandals conquered Gaul, Spain, and Roman Africa – sources of much of Rome’s food supplies
- 451-453 Huns invaded Gaul and northern Italy – Hunnish threat subsided after death of Huns’ leader, Attila, in 453
- 476 Ostrogoths took over Italy and Rome – forced last western Roman emperor, Romulus Augustus, to abdicate – Western Roman Empire fell
- 527-565 Byzantine Emperor Justinian ruled – defeated Ostrogoths, Visigoths, and Vandals – reunited former Roman Empire
- 533-552 Byzantine General Belasarius – conquered North Africa (Carthage) from the Vandals and Sicily and Italy from the Goths
- 634 Muslim Arabs began Islamic diaspora and jihad
- 636-641 Muslim Arabs invaded Levant – defeated Byzantine rulers
- 641-661 four successors of Muhammad ruled Levant from Medina
- 661-750 Umayyad Caliphate – Arabs ruled from Damascus
- 750-1055 Abbasid Caliphate – Arabs and Persians ruled from Baghdad

1055-1258	Abbasid Caliphate – Seljuk Turks and Persians ruled from Baghdad
1071	Battle of Manzikert – Seljuk Turk Sultan Alp Arslan defeated Byzantine Emperor Romanus IV, opened Anatolia to migrations
1080-1256	Seljuk Sultanate of Rum in Anatolia
1096-1291	Crusaders – established feudal kingdoms in western Syria along Mediterranean coast – built around fortified castles
1174-1250	Ayyubid Caliphate, Cairo – Salah al-Din founding leader
1187	Salah al-Din defeated Crusaders – recaptured Jerusalem
1202-1204	Fourth Crusade plundered Constantinople
1241-1256	Mongol invasions of Anatolia
1243	Mongol warriors destroyed Seljuk Sultanate
1255-1517	Mamluk Sultanate – Kipchak Turks and Circassians – ruled Egypt and Levant from Cairo
1258	Mongol warriors sacked Baghdad – ended Abbasid Caliphate

1260	Battle of Ain Jalut – Mamluk General Baybars defeated army of Hulegu Khan, leader of Mongol Ilkhanate state
1300-1923	Ottoman Empire in Anatolia, Balkans, Middle East, North Africa
1300-1326	Osman founded Ottoman Empire – first capital at Bursa in Anatolia
1360-1389	Murad I formed Ottoman province of Rumelia in the Balkans
1402	Battle of Ankara – Timur of Samarkand defeated, killed Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I
1451-1481	Mehmed II conquered Black Sea region
1453	Mehmed II captured Constantinople from Byzantines and re-built the city as Istanbul – ended Byzantine Empire
1511-1521	Selim I defeated Mamluks – conquered Syria, Egypt, and Western Arabia
1520-1566	Suleiman I conquered Hungary and Mesopotamia, codified Ottoman laws – peak of Ottoman power and territorial control
1526	Battle of Mohacs – Suleiman I defeated Habsburg Emperor Charles V
1571	Battle of Lepanto – Holy League of Christian States defeated Ottoman navy

1593-1606	Thirteen-Year War – Ottoman Empire and Austria battled to stalemate
1683	Battle of Vienna – German/Polish army defeated Ottoman army, stopped advance
1699	Treaty of Karlowitz – Ottoman Empire lost Hungary, Transylvania, much of Greece
1709	Battle of Prut – Ottomans defeated Peter the Great of Russia, stopped Russian advance
1790	Austria and Russia restored conquests to Ottoman Empire in Treaty of Sistova
1826	Mahmud II destroyed rebellious Janissary corps, began reforms
1830	Greece gained independence from Ottoman Empire, beginning dismemberment
1839	Rose Garden Decree initiated the Tanzimat reforms, equal rights to all citizens
1853-1856	Britain, France, and Ottoman Empire defeated Russia in the Crimean War
1875	Ottoman government defaulted on foreign debt payments – foreign monitoring began
1878	Treaty of Berlin – Ottoman Empire lost Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus

1908	Young Turks Revolution began – took over Ottoman government in 1913
1913	Bulgaria gained independence after the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913
1914-1918	World War I – Ottoman Empire fought with Germany, Austria-Hungary – defeated
1915-1916	Young Turks carried out Armenian massacres
1919-1922	Turkish Nationalists defeated Greece in War of Independence, drove Greek army out of Anatolia
1920	Treaty of Sevres – Turkey a rump state in northern Anatolia – rest of Anatolia to Greece, France, Italy, Armenia, Kurdistan
1923	Treaty of Lausanne – Republic of Turkey included all of Anatolia and eastern Thrace
1923-present	Republic of Turkey

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Sites Visited for the Mediterranean Empires

A Voyage on the Black Sea Aboard *The World*

***The World*, Residences At Sea**

August 28-September 19, 2013

Ship-based, Aboard *The World*, Residences At Sea

Istanbul, Turkey

We started and ended our voyage in Istanbul – the capital of the Byzantine Empire for 1,100 years (as Constantinople) and, after 1453, the capital of the Ottoman Empire for 470 years. Istanbul is a booming city of 14 million residents spreading across both sides of the Bosphorus in Europe and Asia. On earlier visits, we had visited Istanbul's historical highlights – the 6th-century Hagia Sophia (built by Byzantine Emperor Justinian), the 14th-century Byzantine Church of St. Saviour (Chora), the 15th-century Topkapi Palace (begun by Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II), the 16th-century Suleimaniye Mosque (Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I), and the 17th-century Blue Mosque (Ottoman Sultan Ahmed I). We explored modern Istanbul and walked to Taksim Square, the site of recent demonstrations that humbled Turkey's prime minister and halted development of a shopping mall.

Nessebar, Bulgaria

About 2600 years ago, Dorian Greeks established a colony-settlement, Mesembria, on the little island that is today called Nessebar. Thracians had settled in the region at least 1400 years earlier and had created a small town on the island, which they called Menebria, about 1000 BCE. Mesembria – one of thirty Greek trading ports on the Black Sea coast, set up in the 7th and 6th centuries BCE – exported fish and grain to Greece and received cloth and silver in exchange. The Greek port later was controlled by the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires and by Bulgarian kingdoms. We strolled around the tourist-filled island-town, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. The Archaeological Museum,

housed in the Church of St. John the Baptist, contains a rich collection of local artifacts, and the 11th-century Byzantine Church of St. Stefan has remarkable murals.

Sochi, Russia

Sochi, with a population of 340,000, is Russia's largest resort city. Because it will host the XXII Winter Olympics in 2014, Sochi has received notoriety in the international press. Russian expenditures for the games have greatly exceeded the original \$12 billion budget. According to friends who are helping to plan the Olympics, construction is causing enormous traffic problems in the Sochi area. The semi-tropical Sochi coast was originally home to Circassian peoples who lived in the northwestern Caucasus Mountains. In 1864, Tsarist Russia defeated the militant Circassians in the Caucasian War and expelled most of them to the Ottoman Empire. The Russians constructed Michael Archangel Cathedral in the 1870s to commemorate their victory. In the 1930s, Joseph Stalin built his favorite resort dacha at the Zelonaya Roscha Sanatorium in Sochi.

Novorossiysk, Russia

Novorossiysk, an industrial city of a quarter-million residents, is Russia's leading Black Sea port. The city is a center of food processing and steel manufacturing and an export outlet for grain from southern Russia. Tsarist Russia gained control of the northeastern Black Sea coast in 1829, following its victory over the Ottoman Empire in the Russo-Turkish War, and established Novorossiysk in 1838 as a naval base. After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Novorossiysk was the main center of the White (Menshevik) army until 1920. The city has been designated as a "Hero City" because of its valiant resistance to German Nazi rule in 1942-43. From Novorossiysk, we journeyed inland to Krasnodar, a major industrial center of southern Russia, to observe sites from the 19th century – nobles' residences, a monument to Catherine the Great, gardens, and fountains.

Yalta, Ukraine

Yalta, a seaside resort in southern Crimea, is best known for hosting the Yalta Conference in February 1945. Franklin Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, and Winston Churchill met to negotiate post-World War II rule in Germany, Eastern Europe, and the Far East. They divided Germany and Berlin into four zones of occupation – American, British, Russian, and French. Anxious to have the Soviets enter the war against Japan, FDR met Stalin’s demand that parts of Poland, Sakhalin Island, and the Kurile Islands be annexed to the USSR. Sandra and I toured Yalta’s prime sites – the Russian Orthodox Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, the 19th-century Alupka Palace (built by the Vorontsovs, Russia’s richest family), the Livadia Palace (constructed by Tsar Nicholas II and site of the Yalta Conference), and Chekhov House (where Anton Chekhov wrote “The Cherry Orchard”).

Sevastopol, Ukraine

Catherine the Great built Sevastopol in the 1780s to house Russia’s new Black Sea navy. Today, the city of 360,000 is home to naval bases for Ukraine and Russia. The touristic sites in Sevastopol mirror the history of Crimea. Chersonesus was a key Greek, Roman, and Byzantine grain and wine port for 18 centuries. Bakhchisaray, an hour north, was the capital of the Tatar Khanate of Crimea between 1441 and 1783, when Russia took control from the Ottoman Empire. The Panorama Museum features a life-size painting, *The Defense of Sevastopol*, by Franz Roubaud, which depicts the successful siege of Sevastopol by British and French troops during the Crimean War (1853-1856). From the Sapoune Ridge, one can view the Valley of Death (Balaklava), where 600 British soldiers died in 20 minutes in October 1854, as told in Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s *Charge of the Light Brigade*.

Odessa, Ukraine

Catherine the Great founded Odessa in 1794 to serve as a grain export center. In the 19th century, the Black Sea port boomed and Odessa became a wealthy cosmopolitan city. About one-third of the new city's population was Jewish. Most of the leading grain merchants were Jewish or Greek. Today, the city of one million residents serves as Ukraine's leading port. Odessa's iconic landmark is Potemkin's Steps, a 192-step staircase from the port to the old city center. We walked the Steps, visited the Archeological Museum, and attended a performance of *La Traviata* in the Opera House. We also took a deeply moving tour of Odessa's Jewish heritage. At the Holocaust Museum, three octogenarian Holocaust survivors explained how they escaped the terror rendered by Romanian Nazis in 1941 when 50,000 Odessa Jews were slaughtered.

Constanta, Romania

Constanta is the oldest city and leading port in Romania. When Ionian Greeks founded a city-state there in 600 BCE, they called it Tomis. For four centuries after 29 BCE, Tomis was a leading Roman settlement on the Black Sea. In 8 CE, Emperor Augustus exiled the Roman poet, Ovid, to Tomis. Emperor Constantine renamed the city Constanta to honor his sister. Constanta, today, is a port city of 425,000 people. Much of its old city is under re-construction in an effort to attract tourists. Sandra and I walked around the old city, searching for charm amid the construction projects. We admired a statue of Ovid and visited the extensive collections of Roman coins, implements, and jewelry in the History and Archeological Museum. I escorted a tour to a UNESCO World Heritage site in the Danube Delta, which features 300 species of birds and 45 fish species.

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Mediterranean Family Adventures Program
Stanford Travel/Study Program
July 12-24, 2009
Ship-based, Aboard the *Corinthian II*

Athens and Mycenae, Greece

Our Mediterranean Family adventure appropriately began in Athens. Athens entered Greek history as one of the five major Mycenaean city-states (1600-1100 BCE). The Mycenaeans built the first ancient Greek civilization, four centuries after the Greeks migrated into southeastern Europe from Central Asia. After the Mycenaean states imploded in the 12th century BCE, Greece entered a Dark Age. About 1000 BCE, Athens emerged as a leading new city-state. During the Classical Greek period (7th-4th centuries BCE), democratic Athens was home to many of the world's leading philosophers, including Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. After losing the Peloponnesian War (427-404 BCE) to Sparta, Athens declined. King Philip II of Macedonia defeated Athens and conquered Greece in 338 BCE. Thereafter, foreign powers ruled Greece until 1829 CE.

To introduce our Young Explorers and their parents and grandparents to the wonders of Ancient Greece, we visited several important archaeological sites and museums in Athens and Mycenae. We began at the Acropolis of Athens to marvel at the Parthenon and its associated monuments. We were fortunate to be able to visit the new Museum of the Acropolis, which opened a month earlier. The new museum houses many of the most important sculptures extant from Acropolis buildings, and it aspires to exhibit other artwork from the Acropolis that is currently in museums abroad. Our group also spent a half-day in the National Archaeological Museum of Greece and marveled at the excellent condition of the exhibits from the second and first millennia BC. We then drove south to the Peloponnese to tour the site of Mycenae and its excellent museum.

Ephesus and Kusadasi, Turkey

Ephesus, on the Ionian Coast of western Turkey, is one of the finest extant representations of a Roman city. Before the Romans came in the

2nd century BCE, Ephesus had been a Greek port city. Three waves of Greek migrants established port city-states on the Aegean coast of western Anatolia between 1000 and 800 BCE. Ionians settled the center (Ephesus), Dorians the south (Rhodes), and Aeolians the north (Mytilene). The Romans expanded Ephesus significantly and turned it into the Roman capital of Asia and one of the leading cities in the Roman Empire. During its peak in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, Ephesus had about 200,000 permanent residents and quartered many transient merchants. The city was an administrative center, a leading Aegean seaport in Ionia, an artisanal center, and the heart of a fertile agricultural area.

From the Turkish port of Kusadasi, we bussed to Ephesus and followed the standard tourist path down the two main roads of the city. Ephesus provides an incredibly rich introduction to Roman urban life, because its ruins include such a diverse range of urban buildings and amenities – a library, a theater, a stadium, an Odeon (small theater or meeting house), public baths, a brothel (across the street from and linked by tunnel to the library), a public latrine, numerous temples, paved streets, and water and sewage pipes. The Roman ruins at Ephesus offer a broad understanding of what Roman life must have been like. The beautifully-excavated, opulent terrace houses demonstrate the amazing wealth of ancient Ephesus. Many in our group finished the tour with an inevitable stop at a Turkish carpet store to learn how carpets are made.

Thera (Santorini), Cycladic Islands, Greece

Thera, called Santorini by most tourists, is one of the Cycladic Islands, located in the southern Aegean Sea between the Peloponnese and the Ionian Coast of western Turkey. During the Bronze Age (3000-1000 BCE), the Cycladic Islands housed an advanced non-Greek civilization, which traded regularly with mainland Greece and Minoan Crete and was heavily influenced by Crete in the second millennium BCE. In 1628 BCE, volcanic Thera erupted, disgorging thirty cubic kilometers of material (thirty times that of Mount St. Helens). The population appears

to have had sufficient warning to escape the massive eruption, but the island was devastated. Archaeologists have carried out excavations at Akrotiri, the port city on the south coast. Today, the island prospers from tourism and agriculture (wine grapes, fava beans, and cherry tomatoes).

Our Young Explorers hiked on the tiny volcanic island of Nea Kameni, boated over to Santorini, and rode donkeys up the steep route to the top of the caldera where the town of Fira is sited. Most of the parents and grandparents rode the cable car up Santorini to spend a very pleasant morning walking through the town and visiting the Museum of Prehistoric Thera with our well-informed Greek guides. The museum contains a splendid collection of artifacts from the archaeological excavations at Akrotiri. The adults and kids met for a great Greek lunch at a local restaurant with a spectacular view of the caldera and surrounding ocean. During the afternoon, we visited a winery where the adults enjoyed a wine-tasting and the kids stomped grapes (imported from Israel in the off-season from Santorini's grape harvest) and shopped in the town of Oia.

Knossos and Rethymnon, Crete, Greece

Knossos was the largest of the Minoan Crete palaces (city-states) between 2000 and 1350 BCE. At its peak in the 15th century BCE, Knossos had about 100,000 residents. Incredibly, none of the Minoan city-states had defensive fortifications, indicating a system of cooperation within Crete and a lack of fear of foreign invasion. The Minoan economy was a command system in which the palace royalty decreed production quotas and decided compensation for goods delivered to the central storehouses. Wealth came from productive agriculture and trade links with Aegean islands and Egypt. The Knossos palace had more than 11,000 rooms, housing the court, royal residences, government storehouses, artisanal workshops, and ceremonial courtyards. The Minoan script (Linear A) has not been deciphered, and so the interpretation of Minoan culture is open to debate.

Our group had a fabulous tour of the Knossos palace site and of a special exhibition of forty of the finest Minoan art pieces from the collection of the Heraklion Museum. (Heraklion, the capital of modern Crete, is five miles from Knossos.) Despite temperatures approaching 100 degrees, we saw the highpoints of the palace – the throne room, the massive storage areas, the vast courtyards and procession ways, and replicas of Minoan frescoes. The Museum collection was breath-taking, featuring a large, gold signet ring that was recently recovered. Some of us later toured the Fortezza (fort) and old town in Rethymnon. The massive fort and its charming town were constructed when Venice controlled Crete (1204-1669). Today, Rethymnon is a seaside resort town, catering to Greek and northern European tourists and occasional small cruise ships.

Olympia and Katakolon, Peloponnese, Greece

Olympia was consecrated a sanctuary for the principal Greek god, Zeus, in the Mycenaean period (1600-1100 BCE). The first recorded Olympic games were held there in 776 BCE and attracted athletes from all of the Greek city-states (from the Black Sea to the Iberian Peninsula). The games occurred every four years until 393 CE, when Byzantine Emperor Theodosius banned them as pagan rituals honoring Zeus. At their peak in the 5th century BCE, the Olympics attracted 400 competitors in each of ten events and 25,000 spectators. All Olympians had to be Greek males who competed in the nude. After the Romans conquered Greece in 146 BCE, they continued holding the Olympics at four-year intervals. Olympia was burned by Christians in 426 CE and destroyed by earthquakes in 532 and 561. Many of the magnificent sculptures from Olympia are preserved in the local museum.

Our Stanford families had a grand time in Olympia. We arrived in the small port of Katakolon on the western shore of the Peloponnese and drove 25 miles inland to Olympia. We toured the extensive archaeological site, admiring especially the Temple of Hera (built about 600 BCE), the Temple of Zeus (470 BCE), and the Philippeion (338

BCE, honoring King Philip of Macedonia, the conqueror of Greece and the father of Alexander the Great). Then our Young Explorers participated in a quick relay race on the Olympic race track (the temperature was in the high 90s). Following a delightful lunch in a local taverna, we toured the magnificent Museum of Olympia, which houses many of the finest artifacts from the site's centuries of ancient Greek and Roman history. The central piece on exhibit is the exquisite marble statue of Hermes by Praxiteles (335 BCE).

Taormina and Messina, Sicily, Italy

Our busy itinerary permitted only half a day in Sicily. We docked in Messina, Sicily's third largest city and port (after Palermo and Catania). The buildings in Messina are no more than a century old since the city was leveled by an earthquake in 1908 and suffered further destruction during the Allied invasion of Italy in 1943. We drove 40 minutes south to visit Taormina, a major Greek settlement during the 8th-3rd centuries BCE. Sicily has had a checkered history that reflects its central location in the Mediterranean Sea. During the past three millennia, the fertile island has been occupied (in chronological order) by Greeks and Carthaginians, Romans, Ostrogoths, Arabs, Normans, Suebians, French, and Spanish, before becoming part of Italy during the Italian unification in the 19th century. Today, Sicily is one of the twenty provinces of Italy.

The up-scale resort town of Taormina is on Sicily's northeast coast. Taormina is sited in a spectacular setting, half-way up a mountain with fantastic views of the ocean and rugged coastline below and volcanic Mt. Etna above. The town was an ancient Greek city-state, and it has a quite-well-preserved Greek theater from the 3rd century BCE. The theater seated about 5,000 during the Greek period and about twice that many after the Romans conquered Sicily in 260 BCE and rebuilt Taormina's theater. We enjoyed a relaxing mix of theatrical history, hazelnut ice cream (*gelati nocciola*), and iced sorbet (*granita limone*). Mt. Etna is Europe's most active volcano. The 11,000-foot mountain is a dominating physical feature, and its volcanic ash has created rich,

fertile soil in the plain surrounding the mountain. Mt. Etna last had a major eruption in 2001.

Pompei and Salerno, Italy

In 79 CE, volcanic Mount Vesuvius erupted and destroyed Pompeii. Perhaps one-tenth of Pompeii's 20,000 inhabitants lost their lives in the devastation, mostly from suffocation. Pompeii had been a port town, collecting produce from a rich agricultural hinterland, and a resort center for wealthy Romans. Volcanic pumice covered the town and preserved much of it for centuries. Pompeii today is one of Italy's premier tourist sites because it provides visitors with immediate insights into Roman life, technology, and culture. The beautifully-preserved site contains temples, a 10,000-seat theater, a 1,000-seat Odeon (small theater), several luxurious homes, sophisticated Roman baths, storehouses, and workshops. Pompeii elaborately illustrates imperial Rome at its peak of power, wealth, and grandeur in the late 1st century.

We docked the *Corinthian II* in Salerno, the busy port and (with 100,000 inhabitants) the second-largest city in Campania Province (after Naples) and bussed for 45 minutes northward to Pompeii. There we had the good fortune to have reasonable temperatures (about 90 degrees) and relatively few other tourists visiting the popular site. Our knowledgeable Italian guide took us to observe the highlights of the city's archaeological ruins in a well-paced two-hour tour. We saw the Temple of Apollo (the sun god), the Forum, the Stabian baths, the incredible home of a wealthy land-owning aristocrat, the water-distribution system, the markets, the warehouses (still full of storage jars), and amazingly well-preserved mosaic floors. By observing the structures of Roman life in Pompeii, one can gain a profound appreciation of Roman applied technology.

Rome and Civitavecchia, Italy

Rome, the Eternal City, still feels like the center of the Western World to awestruck tourists. After 28 centuries as an important capital city (or regional town), Rome remains regal and inspiring. Legendary Rome was founded in the mid-8th century BCE after Romulus killed Remus and established the city. When Augustus Caesar proclaimed the Roman Principate (Empire) in 27 BCE, Rome housed one million people and drew on the entire expanding empire for food and other resources. After the Western Roman Empire fell in 476 CE, Rome's population declined to less than 50,000. But Rome retained its prominence because it emerged as the center of the Catholic Christian Church. Rome became the capital of Italy after the unification of the country in 1861. For the past eight decades, the Vatican has been an independent state within a state.

The *Corinthian II* docked in Civitavecchia, the principal port for Rome. Our group bussed into Rome for a very full (and hot) day of sight-seeing, led by well-informed guides. We began at the Roman Forum to learn about the focal center of Imperial Rome. Next we walked on to the 70,000-seat Colosseum (completed in 80 CE) and imagined how gladiators and wild animals entertained Rome's elite and masses. We then moved northward to the Pantheon and marveled at the engineering and artwork in that dome-shaped masterpiece, the only remaining Roman building that permits one to observe how the Romans used marble sculpture to decorate their brick-and-stone buildings. We walked to the nearby Piazza Navona to have lunch and then spent the afternoon strolling to the Trevi Fountain, Spanish Steps, and Piazza del Popolo.

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A Cruise in the Mediterranean
Silversea Cruises
October 6-24, 2006
Ship-based, Aboard the *Silver Whisper*

Livorno and Lucca, Italy

Livorno is a bustling, prosperous port and industrial city, but it has little to attract the attention of historically-minded tourists. Therefore, we signed on to a ship's tour of Lucca, a beautiful small city located in the Appenine Mountains about 40 minutes away from Livorno. We had visited Lucca six years ago and were looking forward to revisiting the walled city. Our enthusiasm was dampened by an unusually heavy rainstorm that interrupted the first two hours of the city tour. But our local guide was good, and everyone kept their spirits up, despite the downpour. Lucca was first constructed by the Republican Romans in 180 BCE to serve as a strategic outpost guarding mountain trails in the far north of the expanding Roman Empire. By that time, Rome had defeated Hannibal of Carthage and begun its expansion outside of the Italian peninsula. But it needed to protect itself from the Celtic tribes in the Alpine region. After the Roman Empire fell to the Germanic Ostrogoths in the 5th century CE, Lucca continued to benefit from its strategic location on trade routes connecting Rome with the north and Pisa with Florence.

Lucca prospered in the late Medieval and early Renaissance periods when it was a center of embroidering textiles with imported silk. When the small city lost that specialization, it became a center for banking and finance in the Tuscany region and was the only city-state in Tuscany to maintain its independence when the Medicis in Florence conquered the rest of the region. During each of those booms, the city expanded by re-locating its city wall. The current, very impressive wall was built in the late Renaissance period (the 16th century). On our tour, we visited the wall and the 13th century cathedral, dedicated to St. Martin, and 12th century St. Michael's church, both featuring Romanesque architecture. We also saw the 19th century home where Giacomo Puccini, the opera composer, was born in 1858 and walked in the old town where the Romans had originally located their outpost and visited the site of the Roman amphitheater. Today, Lucca has about 100,000 inhabitants who prosper by serving tourists and a rich agricultural hinterland. Modern Lucca is renowned for its high-quality extra virgin olive oil.

Sorrento, Italy

On the fourth day of the cruise, we visited Sorrento, a spectacular resort town in Campania, south of Naples. The picturesque town of 20,000 permanent residents and countless tourists is sited on a steep cliffside on a peninsula south of Naples. The renowned Amalfi Coast, formerly the home of the trading city-state of Amalfi (which competed with Venice, Genoa, and Florence for economic leadership in the Italian Renaissance period) is located on the south side of the same peninsula. A long walk around Sorrento is reminiscent of a trek in Nepal – the distances are short as the crow flies but long with all of the ups and downs that are involved. It was a great day for exercise, as we made our way up and down steps that connected the cliff-side town with the seaside docks and shops. We also enjoyed a fine view of the volcano of Vesuvius, near Naples, which erupted and destroyed Pompeii nearly two millennia ago.

Rhodes, Greece

At first glance, it might seem that Malta and Rhodes have little in common, other than both being charming islands in the eastern Mediterranean Sea with long, complicated histories. In actuality, the main tourist attraction in both islands is the same – the Palace of the Grand Masters of the Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St. John. The Knights moved to Rhodes in 1291, after the Turks expelled them from Cyprus. They ruled the island with a firm hand until the Ottomans drove them into exile in Malta in 1522. Rhodes, earlier a part of Greek, Roman, and Byzantine imperial history, then was ruled by the Ottoman Empire until 1912. Italy governed the small island, sited seven miles off the coast of southwestern Turkey, until the end of the Second World War. Rhodes was incorporated into Greece in 1948 along with the other Dodecanese Islands and is now a prospering part of the European Union with about 200,000 residents.

Sandra and I spent a half-day wandering around the medieval part of the city of Rhodes in gorgeous, mid-70s weather. Both the Grand Palace and the former hospital of the Knights Hospitaller have been converted beautifully into museums – of history and archaeology, respectively. We were struck both by the incredible wealth that the Knights accumulated and by the community services that they provided to needy people. It was fascinating to be able to trace the same Order through two island locations and over five centuries (1291-1798). While in Rhodes, we also visited a Byzantine church, a collection of residential mementos from the 16th-19th centuries in a fine arts museum, a Jewish synagogue and museum, and a Turkish library. Rhodes is a major tourist center, but it holds its hordes of visitors nicely and is well worth a visit.

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**A Cruise on the Mediterranean Sea
Holland-America Line
September 29-October 19, 2000
Ship-based, Aboard the MS Noordam**

Nauplion, Greece

Nauplion was the most pleasant surprise of the entire trip. Nauplion is a beautiful, small port town on the east coast of the Peloponnesian peninsula of southern Greece. Sandra and I rented a car, drove around the region surrounding the town, and had a magical day and evening. First we went to Epidaurus, where we saw the best preserved remaining early Greek amphitheater. The acoustics there are still nearly perfect. This site also features a large archeological dig and a small but fine museum. We next had a pleasant lunch at a seaside taverna and then drove on to Mycenae. The Mycenaean culture flourished about 1500-1000 BC and created the first Greek-speaking empire (defeating the non-Greek-speaking Minoan culture of Crete in the 14th century BC). Mycenae was the headquarters of this empire, and today it is possible to

observe well-preserved ruins of this palace society in a spectacular location of rolling hills. We topped off this marvelous day with a light meal in a typical taverna in Nauplion.

Rome, Italy

Sandra and I decided that we would be sensible tourists in Rome and not try to rush around seeing everything. We had been to Rome several times in the past. This time we began by focusing entirely on ancient Roman ruins – the Colosseum, the Forum, the Baths, and the Palatine Hill. We trained to and from Rome from the port, and we walked around the old city for several hours. It was a delightful return to a city that will always remain one of our favorites. We each escorted all-day bus tours to the Vatican City. We both learned an enormous amount from excellent guides, and it was wonderful to be able to visit the Sistine Chapel on a private tour after hours. The 13-hour touring day was exhausting – especially for the passengers who had just arrived in Europe and were suffering from jet lag – but it was a wonderfully rewarding way to re-visit St. Peter’s Basilica and the Sistine Chapel.

Palma de Mallorca, Spain

On October 14, the *Noordam* was docked in Palma de Mallorca, the capital and largest city (300,000 inhabitants) of the Balearic Islands in Spain. Sandra and I escorted morning tours to Valldemosa, a beautiful Mallorcan hillside town near Palma. Valldemosa houses a medieval monastery where Frederic Chopin and George Sand once lived briefly, when Chopin was trying to recover from tuberculosis. The town is set in a gorgeous terraced hillside and is very charming. Mallorca, once the center of cartography in the world, is today a popular haven for European tourists, and about 200,000 Germans have settled there (in a total population of about 800,000). Despite all of the tourists, Sandra and I were greatly attracted by the beauty and charm of the island.

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